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SPRING 2001

volume 21 number 2
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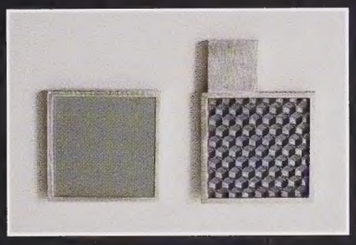

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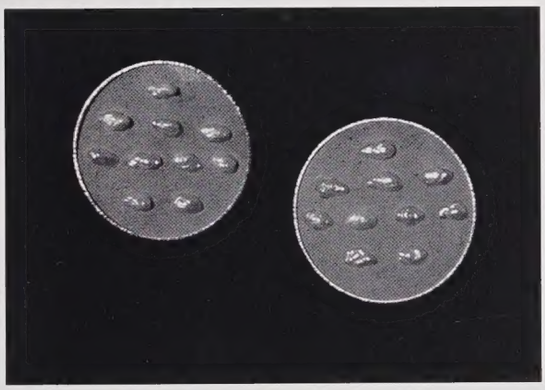

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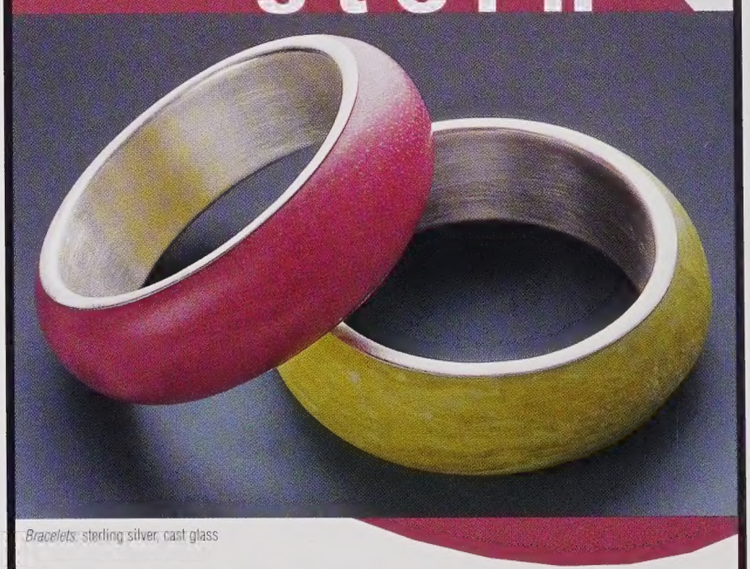

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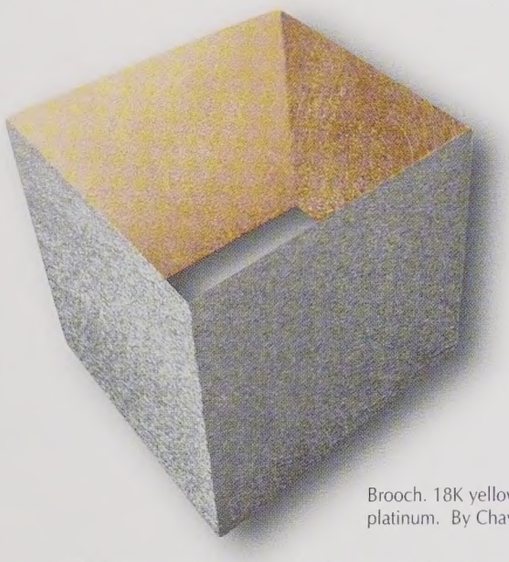
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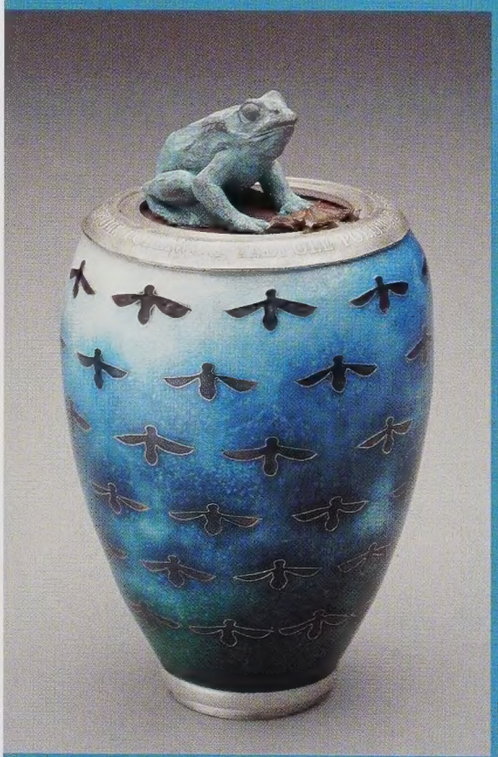
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$1\frac{7}{8} \times 2\frac{5}{8} \times \frac{1}{2}$"

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from the editor

FRANK LEWIS

With this issue I officially and optimistically hand over the reins of *Metalsmith* to Suzanne Ramljak. If you haven't already, you will soon be reading an impressive list of Suzanne's accomplishments and achievements so I will not repeat them here. Suffice it to say that Suzanne brings a laudable body of experience and knowledge to her new position. In conversations with Suzanne, I was reminded of my own excitement, vision, and sense of purpose when I began to edit the magazine over eight years ago. Her enthusiasm and sense of purpose foretells great things for *Metalsmith* and SNAG. Welcome Suzanne and good luck.

I now wish to take this opportunity as outgoing editor to remind you, the readers, of a few things.

Metalsmith is unlike any other magazine. It is the only magazine in the United States devoted in its entirety to the metal arts, and particularly metal in the practice of hollowware and jewelry. While there are a number of magazines that feature hollowware and jewelry as a part of their content, no other magazine dedicates itself so exclusively to this area. Furthermore *Metalsmith* is the only magazine, published in North America, that features as a significant part of its content, serious discussions of both the theoretical and the critical issues which concern the practice of metalsmithing and jewelry. And while I know that some readers may dismiss the importance of that content, we should remember that criticism and theory advance the practice of and the individuals involved in the practice of metalsmithing. Even the weekend crafter, and the proprietor of a local craft show booth, ultimately benefit from the seriousness and sense of purpose and history that results from a headier discussion of what making symbolizes and means in our society at large.

While we do not offer recipes and helpful practical hints, by featuring a variety of practicing craft people, working in gallery, commercial, and academic venues, we promote a network of professionals and constantly challenge readers to evaluate standards and assumptions about what it is they do and seek through metalworking. We show the works, and discuss the reasons people make, so that, at least in part, practitioners can see the things about which they wish to learn and whom they may wish to learn them from.

Finally I wish to point out something that is often overlooked or maybe even not known to the general readership. If one were to compare the masthead of this magazine to any other comparable magazine in terms of quality, excellence of content, or sheer production values, they should be shocked to find that this magazine is produced by a very, very small group of professionals. This lack of a large staff puts an enormous amount of pressure and work on the editor, designers, advertising director, and production coordinator. Suzanne, along with the rest of the production team has undertaken a gargantuan task with little support staff. I ask that you support her in every way possible, that you all take a moment to consider the amount of commitment that she is bringing to the job, because ultimately, it is all for you.

Farewell to you all. ■

FCL

METALSMITH

a publication of SNAG,
the organization for jewelers,
designers and metalsmiths

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Metalsmith [ISSN 0270-1146] is published in January, March, May, August, and October by SNAG, a not-for-profit organization, 2275 Amigo Drive, Missoula, Montana 59808.

Annual Subscription
to *Metalsmith* [5 issues]: $29 North America, $41 Foreign.
SNAG one-year membership rates include a subscription to *Metalsmith*: $59 North America, $75 Foreign.
Students: $40 North America, $53 Foreign.
Multi-year subscriptions and memberships are also available at a discount.

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Claims for missing issues are accepted only if received within three months.

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Metalsmith is indexed in Art Index.
The full text of *Metalsmith* is available in the electronic versions of Art Index. On-line [computer] indexing is available through Wilsonline, 950 University Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452.

National Newsstand Distribution
Eastern News Distributors
250 West 55th Street, New York, NY 10019.

Contents
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Third class postage permit at Duluth, Minnesota, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster
Send address changes to
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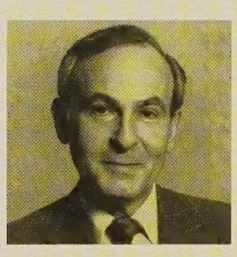
OBITUARY
ALAN FORTUNOFF

text by Rosanne Raab



Alan Fortunoff, President and CEO of Fortunoff, NY, passed away last summer. Mr. Fortunoff continued a family tradition in retailing, where his energy and wisdom as an innovator and entrepreneur created a legacy that will stand as a personal testament for generations to come.

Mr. Fortunoff's interest in the future of the American metalsmith led to sponsorship of a three-year exhibition project that brought acclaim to many talented members of the Society of North American Goldsmiths. Each year a distinguished jury of metalsmiths and museum experts selected hollowware and flatware for *Silver: New Forms and Expressions*. The exhibition premiered at Fortunoff, followed by an extended tour to museums and galleries around the United States.

It is unusual that an individual gives of himself to so many. Alan Fortunoff was such a person. He exemplified integrity and strong personal ethics. We honor his memory.

Rosanne Raab is a freelance curator and a past board member of the Society of North American Goldsmiths.

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ENTER!

In 2002, 3M will celebrate its 100th year in the creation and manufacture of fine innovative tools for trade and industry. The Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) and 3M have teamed up to celebrate this centenary by hosting a competition. The competition includes a gala exhibition, print and digital catalogs, a touring collection, and $18,000 in prize money. The event is administered by SNAG and sponsored by 3M. The competition is open to all metalsmiths resident in the US and Canada over the age of 18, from students to professionals, whether they are members of SNAG or not. **The only requirement for entry is that the metalsmith use at least five 3M products in the process of creating his/her work.**

The prestigious Center for the Visual Arts at Metropolitan State College in Denver will be hosting the main exhibition from June 6-26, 2002, coinciding with SNAG's 2002 conference on June 12-15. The Center has received the 2001 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts and the Downtown Denver Award. It is close to the conference hotel, and the Center will be a central feature in the conference's Gallery Tour.

THE COMPETITION THEME

We want you to think of the word "tool" this way: *a tool embodies and extends your will, enabling you to accomplish a particular task.* Tools and toolmaking are the ancient domain of the metalsmith. We invite you to delve into this rich heritage and produce an innovative version of a traditional form. Alternately, you can identify a new need and create a tool to address it.

We want to see entries that reflect the personality of their makers, either through the tool's form, or through the tool's particular application. Focus on tools intended for a very specific task that you face outside the studio. What have you made for yourself to use in the kitchen or the garden or out hiking?

In all cases we want you to consider the special relationship that metalsmiths have with tools. A tool that makes the difficult possible brings us joy; a tool that requires dexterity brings us discipline; a tool that fits us perfectly has a unique grace. Let your design embody the respect, delight, and wonder that we feel when we have exactly the right tool for the task.

CATEGORIES

First, second, and third place prizes will be awarded in each of the following categories:

1. Tools that are worn on the body during use. All jewelry entered in this category must have a clear, specific function in addition to adornment. Consider taking an innovative approach to traditional forms such as buttons, buckles, inro, chatelaines, lockets, identification or medical alert items, articles for managing hair, and eyewear. The proliferation of personal electronic devices presents an opportunity to develop elegant disguises for them.

2. Tools that are not worn on the body during use. Possibilities in this category include utensils for cooking, serving, and eating, perfume bottles, desk accessories, writing instruments, items for religious observance, and specialized containers or dispensers.

EVALUATION OF WORK

Our distinguished jurists are:

CHARLES CROWLEY,
silversmith, Top Dog Studio, Gloucester, MA

KIFF SLEMMONS,
jeweler, Seattle, WA

EDWARD S. COOKE, JR.,
Montgomery Professor of American Decorative Arts, Department of History of Art, Yale University, New Haven, CT

The jury will select works to be shown at the exhibition in Denver as well as a smaller group of pieces for the traveling collection. During SNAG 2002 in Denver two judges chosen by SNAG and one from 3M will review the exhibition and select the prize winners. **In each of the two categories the awards are:**

FIRST PRIZE:	$5,000
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THIRD PRIZE:	$1,500

There will also be Honorable Mention and 3M Judge's Choice certificates in each category.

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CATALOGS Images of all of the pieces from the main exhibition will be included in a CD-ROM catalog. A print catalog will feature images of the pieces selected for the traveling collection. Artists with work in either collection will receive a complimentary copy of the catalog(s). Both catalogs will be produced by digitally scanning the slides submitted by the entrants. Also, the catalogs will include an introduction by Suzanne Ramljak, editor of *Metalsmith*, and a critical essay by Edward S. Cooke, the Montgomery Professor of American Decorative Arts in the Department of the History of Art at Yale University. SNAG will be donating copies of these catalogs to the permanent libraries of the venues on the tour route as well as to major craft museums in North America. 3M will also receive copies of both catalogs. The digital version will be posted on the SNAG web site at **www.snagmetalsmith.org,** and the images will be available for 3M's use in marketing their products.

TRAVELING COLLECTION When the exhibit at the Center for Visual Arts closes toward the end of June 2002, the traveling collection will begin its tour of North American venues. The exact route they will take has not yet been determined, but it will include a variety of sites such a museums, galleries, and other arts facilities.

CALENDAR

December 1, 2001: All entries must be postmarked by this date.

January 2002:
Jurying of slides.

February 2002:
Artists notified. Those whose work is not selected for the exhibition will receive their slides back. Those whose work is accepted for the exhibition will receive a contract with shipping instructions.

June 6-26, 2002:
"Innovative Tools" show opens at the Center for Visual Arts.

June 12-15:
SNAG Annual Conference in Denver

July 1, 2002:
Works selected for the traveling collection are sent to the first venue; all other work is returned to the artists.

ENTRY FEE

$20 for members of SNAG
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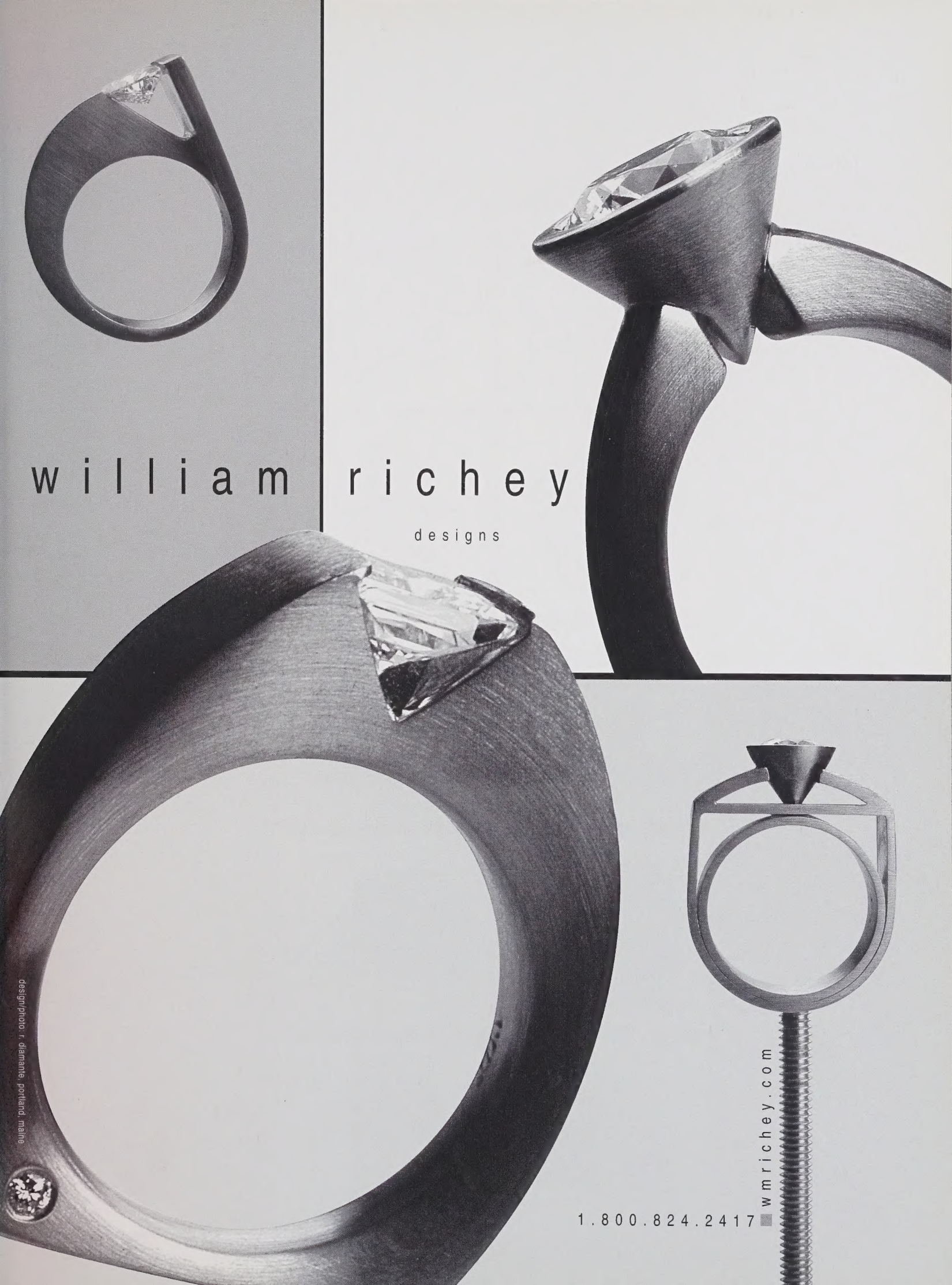
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ERRATA

In the article *The Golden Age of Helmets* in the Fall 2000 issue of *Metalsmith* a number of captions and figure numbers were incorrectly placed. In an effort to correct this error we are running the illustrations in the article with their correct captions and with the figure numbers keyed to those in the article. The editor sincerely apologizes to the author, the readers, and to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for this error.

Figure 1
War Hat: Spain; late 15th century
steel, copper, textile
weight 3 lb. 12 oz.
DP18122/29.150.9a

Figure 10
Close-Helmet for the Tilt: Austria (Innsbruck); ca. 1580–1590
steel, leather, textile
weight 7 lb. 5 oz.
DP18177/48.149.30

Figure 2
Armet: Italy (Milan); ca. 1490 and later additions
steel, brass
weight 6 lb. 7 oz.
DP18119/28.74.2

Figure 11
Closed Burgonet of "Savoyard" Type: Italy; ca. 1600–1620
steel
weight 10 lb. 1 oz.
DP18160/14.25.512

Figure 3
Tournament Helmet; Anglo-Flemish; ca. 1510–1520
steel
weight 10 lb. 5 oz.
DP18128/29.158.38

Figure 12
Closed Burgonet: Netherlands; ca. 1620–1630
steel, gold, brass
weight 5 lb. 5 oz.
DP18215/14.25.513

Figure 7
Pointed Morion: Italy (Milan); ca. 1560–1570
steel, gold, silver
weight 2 lb. 15 oz.
DP18189/14.25.620

Figure 14a
Spider Helmet: England or France; ca. 1650–1700 (Closed)
steel, paint, textile
weight 4 lb. 11 oz.
DP18082/14.25.523

Figure 8
Burgonet in Oriental Style: Germany (Nuremberg?); ca. 1560
steel, gold, brass
weight 2 lb.
DP18157/04.3.216

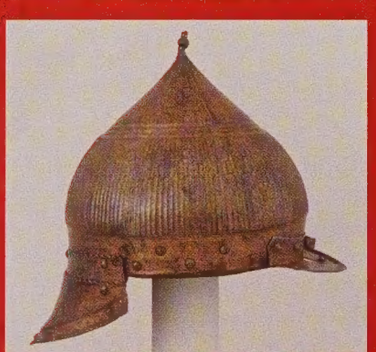

Figure 14a
Spider Helmet: England or France; ca. 1650–1700 (open)
steel, paint, textile
weight 4 lb. 11 oz.
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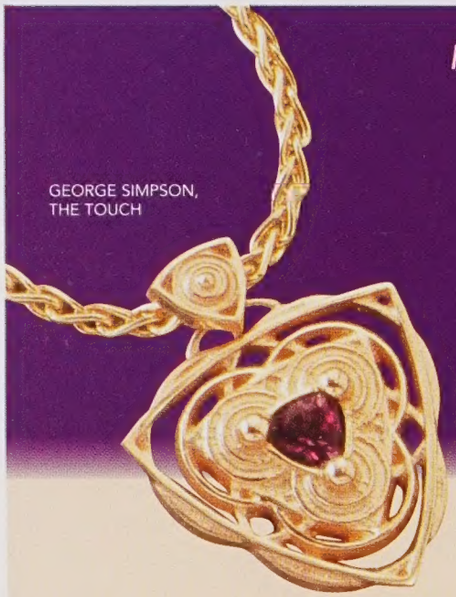
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Entry deadline: Slides of finished entries due December 31, 2001.

Catalogs from the 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000 exhibitions are available.

For entry guidelines and prospectus contact:

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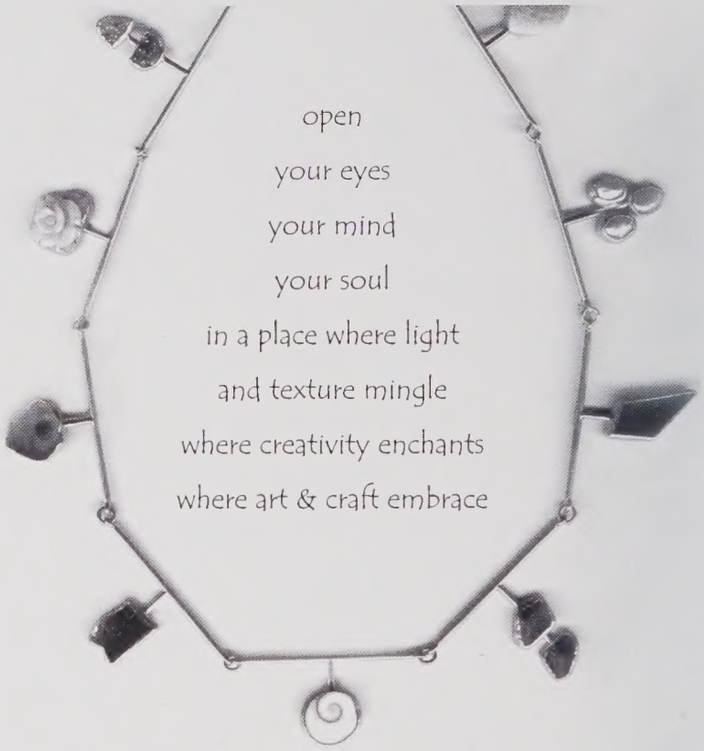

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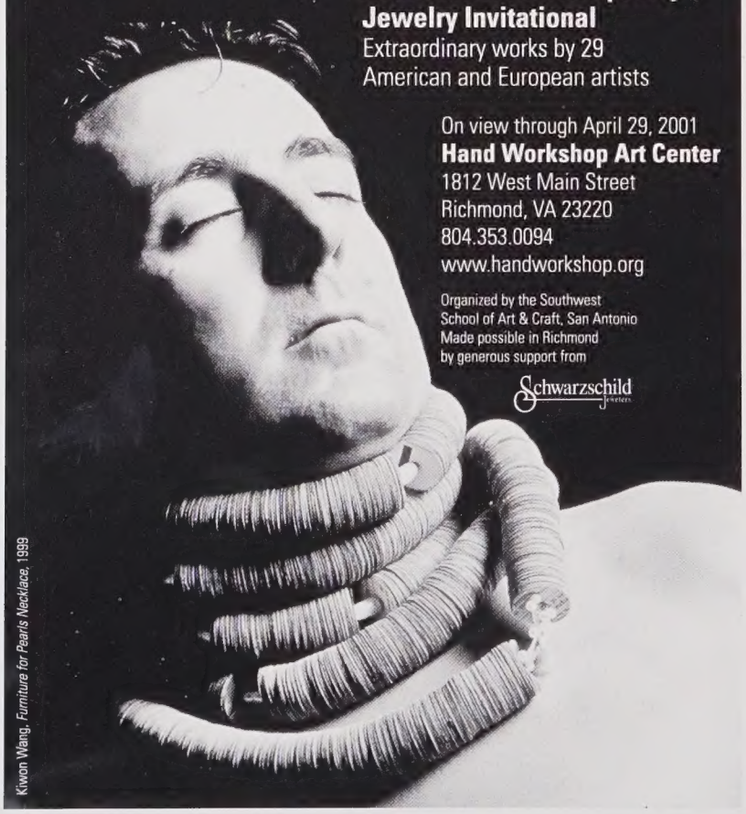

Kiwon Wang, *Furniture for Pearls Necklace*, 1999

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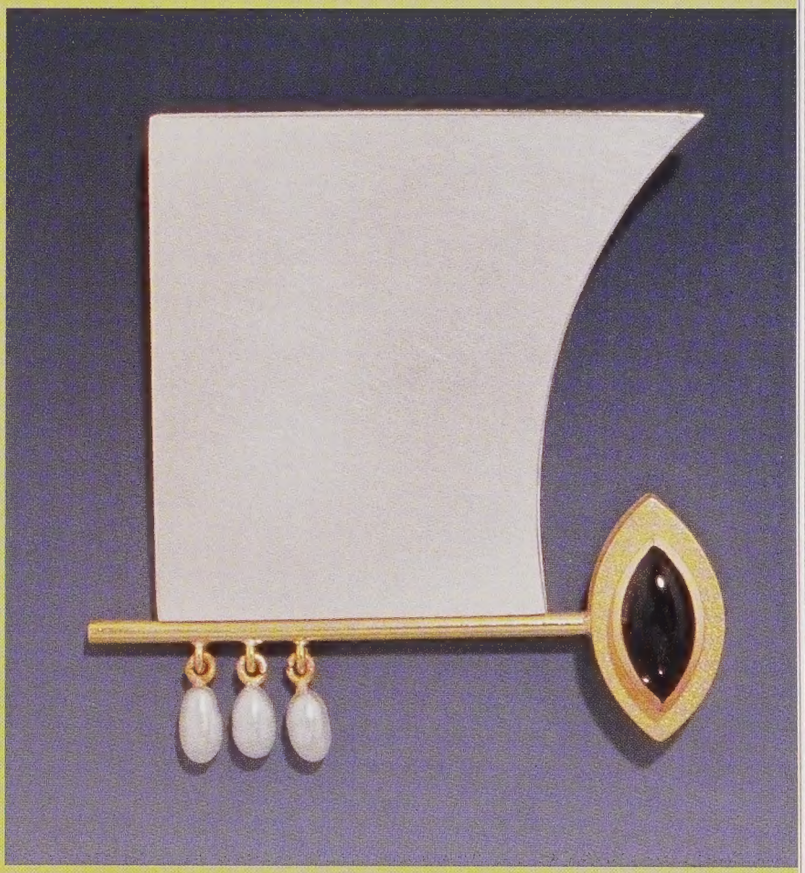
JANIS KERMAN

above
E478, 2000
18k, soochoo jade, tourmaline, carnelian, black mother of pearl

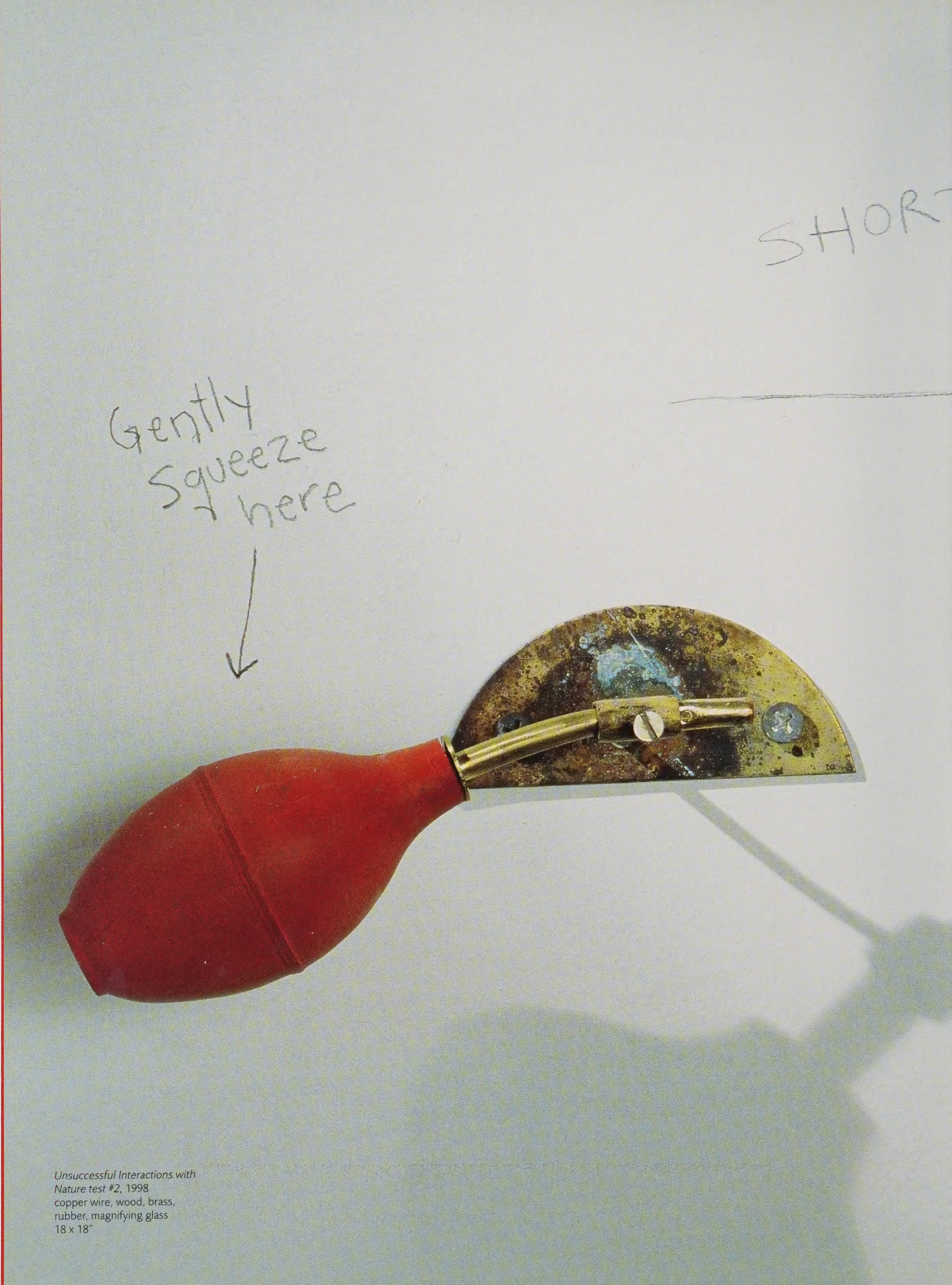
Asymmetry in design involves risks. Not only the simple weight of a form, but its visual weight, impacted by surface, color, and sheen demands a sensitivity that transcends the literal. Even the dynamic of one stone juxtaposed against another often creates a tension that is greater than the sheer bulk or physical size of the components. Janis Kerman evinces an understanding of both the tangible and intangible factors of design. Her harmonies of color and shape, orchestrated by her superb sense of craft, augment the natural beauty of the material. Her daring refusal to echo or mirror forms, particularly in her earrings, challenges our conventional notions of balance and traditional aesthetics.



top left
B252, 2000
sterling, 18k, pearls

bottom left
E555, 2000
18k white, spessartite garnet, 0.18ct
diamond, tahitian pearl

right
B253, 2000
sterling, 18k, tourmaline, pearls

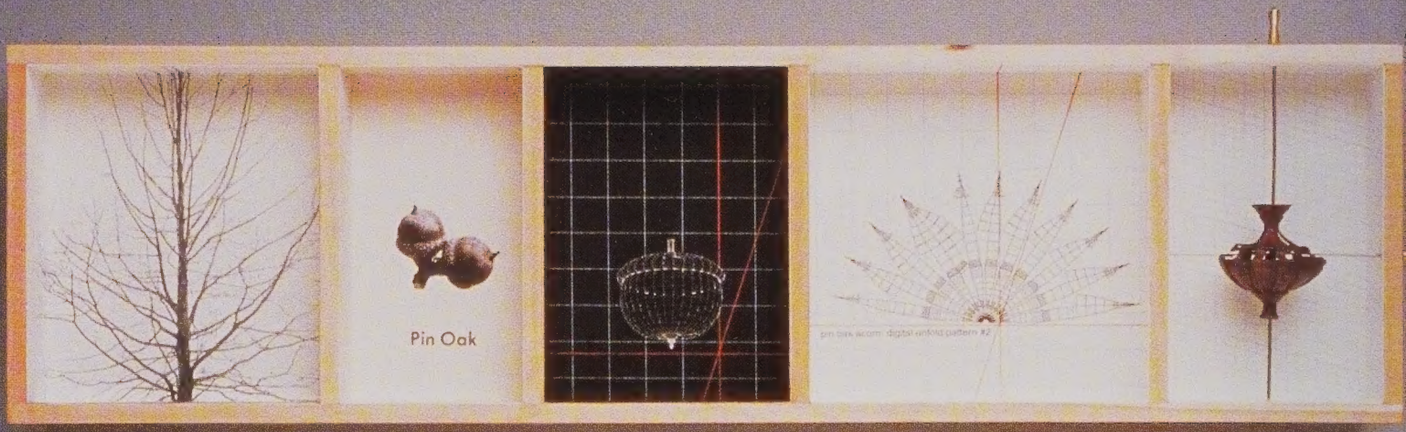


Unsuccessful Interactions with Nature test #2, 1998
copper wire, wood, brass,
rubber, magnifying glass
18 x 18"

Deb Todd Wheeler: Expanding Structure

text by Debra Brehmer

On a mid-November day, Deb Todd Wheeler's garden amounts to a matted mound of dried up stalks and grasses crouched along the side of her Victorian home in Boston. Wheeler said she had tried to grow things there for five years and everything died. It was finally her mother's more expert gardening knowledge that renewed the bed. Earlier, in her studio, she had spoken of this garden with great enthusiasm, marveling at each seasonal renewal and the wild, blooming flurry of summer. So as we pulled up to her house, I had expected to see something dramatic, at the least a series of groomed plots dominating the front yard. Instead, this side garden lies passive and hidden, saved for one's private pleasure.



top
A is for Acorn: unfold/refold pattern #2, 2000
copper
Photograph by Dean Powell

bottom
detail, *A is for Acorn: unfold/refold pattern #2*, 2000
copper
Photograph by Dean Powell

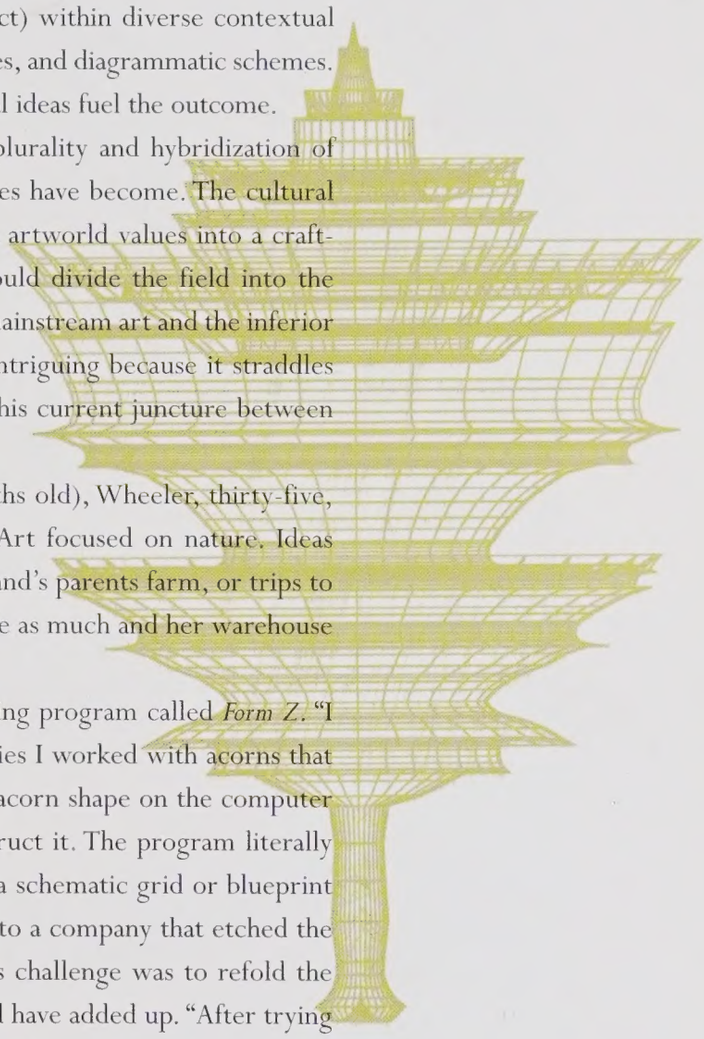
Wheeler's art work, likewise, hinges on a need to envision process — the stages of growth and production and how those logical increments magically lead to both mythically complex and densely simple things like an acorn, a bud or a maple leaf. Wheeler's work is ripe with the conundrum of creation. To enter her field of thought through the objects she creates is to spiral into a web of oppositions.

Even Wheeler's work process refuses to settle into a knowable or systematized production. She is categorized as a metalsmith and teaches in the metals department at Massachusetts College of Art in Boston (MassArt), yet seldom works in metals, opting for almost any other medium, from cement to flocking, feathers, wax, and most recently, computer-generated sculpture. Her work holds onto an essential connection with the "object" but augments it (the product) within diverse contextual approaches utilizing video production, performance, installation practices, and diagrammatic schemes. The consistency in her work is that nature is the referent and conceptual ideas fuel the outcome.

As the field of metals expands from its rooting in craft into the plurality and hybridization of today's art concerns, Wheeler represents just how fluid old boundaries have become. The cultural critic Lucy Lippard has spoken of how "the introduction of dominant artworld values into a craft-oriented community is a double-edged sword." She meant that it could divide the field into the intellectually superior who ascribe to current theoretical practices of mainstream art and the inferior who cling to craft and the sanctity of the object. Wheeler's work is intriguing because it straddles this ground without demeaning either position. How she arrived at this current juncture between object and context was both a matter of evolution and happenstance.

After the birth of her first child last year (he is now eighteen months old), Wheeler, thirty-five, found herself housebound. Her work since graduate school at MassArt focused on nature. Ideas emerged from long walks in the Arnold Arboretum, visits to her husband's parents farm, or trips to the coast. With baby Lucas in tow, she found it impossible to be outside as much and her warehouse studio seemed inhospitable to a newborn.

As a result, she turned to her computer and learned a 3-D rendering program called *Form Z*. "I drew inspiration from forms close to my home," she said. For one series I worked with acorns that dropped from the giant oak tree in front of my house." She drew the acorn shape on the computer and then asked *Form Z* to generate several logical patterns to reconstruct it. The program literally analyzed and deconstructed the geometry of the acorn — rendering a schematic grid or blueprint of its mechanical composition. She then e-mailed the computer plans to a company that etched the drawings on copper plates. After UPS delivered the plates, Wheeler's challenge was to refold the copper diagrams back into the acorn shape, which theoretically, should have added up. "After trying to fold the first one, I stopped trying. It was too hard," she said. She exhibited the copper acorns in divided shadow boxes that documented the process by including a computer print of the diagram, computer analysis of the acorn's axis, photographs of the tree, and an acorn. The objects themselves — the weirdly reconstituted copper acorns — are delicately elegant forms that reflect their point of origin in nature, but become something wholly unto themselves — mutated, evolutionary failures of a sort.



above
Schematic Drawing, 2000
ink on paper

The questions raised by this series *A is for acorn*, are many. It ultimately asks, "what is an acorn," (a question that is funny in its obtuseness) and uses empirical, technological means to dissect it. The system, of course, fails. Nature holds a core mystery or alchemy that defies even this high level of sophisticated probing. So she takes an object that has become a cliché, pulls it through a scientific transmutation, which elevates its self-image by revealing its actual complexities, and ends the statement with a photographic document of the acorn — back to square one. Somehow the inherent uselessness of artistic process itself is implied within these acorn pieces as they ultimately ask "What's the point? Why, as artists, do we struggle to define beauty by creating useless objects and, how does form or the formal lead to meaning?"

Wheeler has been wrestling with these questions for a long time. As an undergraduate at the

above
Refolded Copper Acorns, 2000
copper
Photograph by Dean Powell

University of Vermont (she is originally from Rye, New York) she majored in Romance Languages and minored in fine art with an emphasis on painting. After graduating, she moved to Boston, became a waitress, and faced the limitations of a liberal arts education. "One day, I got some scissors and began cutting my admittedly bad paintings into small pieces and putting some jewelry findings on them and selling them on the street," she said. "That's how I got into jewelry." Enjoying this process of cutting and pasting paintings into jewelry, she started a small company and sold her work at craft fairs across the country. After two years of travel, she burned out, and at her mother's suggestion, enrolled in the Gemological Institute of America in Santa Monica, Ca., to learn how to "really" make jewelry.

Wheeler describes the GIA as boot camp. "The curriculum was designed to wear us down. They worked our fingers to the bone every single day. I guess I was trained to be a fast and efficient craftsman there." Two years later and after some "really unmentionable bodies of work" she was ready for graduate school.

MassArt was the kind of place that encouraged the cross-pollination of media and Wheeler thrived on it. One piece in grad school, *Tales of a Catholic Girl*, was a twenty-minute performance for which she made some elaborate body and non-body-related props. It explored her experience growing up under matriarchal Catholic rule. "I think my ideas at the time were a bit heavy handed," she reflects. "But I think I was trying to get at the root of my internal conflicts of being a woman, wanting to believe in a 'higher power' and hating the institution built in the name of some greater being and its misogynistic underpinnings."

Her final body of MFA work was an installation of human-scaled wings made of diverse materials: One was cast in chocolate, another assembled from folded pages of teenage pulp books, others from cast aluminum, beeswax and Jack-in-the-pulpit leaves. This series was about death and afterlife. The wings also reflected Wheeler's struggle to assimilate the values of function versus non-function in art objects. She yearned to do something useful, to make practical things, but found that it restricted her process.

While this body of work was important, it was a slide dissolve piece called *Naked in the Woods* that was pivotal. The slide dissolve was presented on an eight-by-eight foot surface. The viewer watched a group of naked people running through the woods while listening through headphones to a description of the process of running, tripping, falling and landing. By clinically dissecting this odd pairing of naked bodies and nature she distanced her observations and established herself within the art process as witness as much as mediator. This was the point at which Wheeler realized her interest in using process to open the foundations of the material world in an effort to exhume the fine line where science and religion adjoin and to try to fold them back together.

She cites Harvard professor Stephen Jay Gould's book, *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* as a brilliant examination of these ideas. In the book, Gould searches for a resolution that allows science and religion to coexist peacefully. He writes, "Science tries to document the factual character of the natural world, and to develop theories that coordinate and explain these facts. Religion, on the other hand, operates in the equally important, but utterly different, realm of human purpose, meanings and values — subjects the factual domain of science might illuminate, but can never resolve."

It wasn't until 1995, however, that Wheeler focused her first body of work on nature and her thoughts began to crystallize. She produced a series of silver rings that contained some kind of emergent growth that made them unwearable. Because the wing series had focused on death, she wanted to explore the opposite: rebirth, growth. Having married several years earlier, she was inspired to muse over the implications of that bond as represented in a wedding ring. The plant forms that emerge from the silver bands are symbolic of how love can stimulate personal growth by cracking the armor of our psychic defenses. They reflect how persistent and strong are our soulful constitutions.

Still wrestling with the idea of usefulness in art or how to challenge the perception of usefulness, Wheeler continued to develop work that created a tension between the notions of function/non-

above
Computer generated blueprint for how to construct a revolving oak leaf, 2000
ink on paper

opposite page top
Dead wing looking for a hanger, 1994
cast aluminum, steel
50 x 36 x 24"

opposite page bottom left
Dead wing looking for a hanger, 1994
cast aluminum, steel
50 x 36 x 24"

opposite page bottom right
excerpt from Three Variations on a Theme, 1996
copper, silver, hair

left
Unsuccessful Intervention with Nature, Test #3, 1998
paint, copper, aluminum, lead
48 x 60 x 8"

function. Her next body of work involved spoons. She gave herself an assignment of sorts: to produce a series of small works that were inspired by a range of objects she had found on her walks, with the unifying factor being that each piece had to ultimately revolve itself in a ladle or spoon shape. The result was a series of eight spoons, six of sterling silver, and two of flora and wax construction.

This series represents how important walking, looking, sorting, and cataloging are to her creative process. Wheeler said it was her dog, Nick, that initiated the process. "He was totally wild," she said. "He needed a daily walk to be worn out, so we'd go over to the Arnold Arboretum, a park that is open to the public, owned and operated by Harvard University, and full of the most exotic plant life around. Walking Nick every day and being a low-level pack rat, I'd have my eye to the ground for interesting forms.

"I sort of look at collecting as the retrieval of the earth and its inhabitants residue, skins, discarded detritus. Or even sort of proof. Like, proof of the passage of time, the life cycle. Things grow, die, decay all the time. A perfect and overused metaphor for ourselves. How as we grow and evolve as humans, parts of our psyche is born or dies away with each passing year. Collecting for me is like a nostalgic gesture."

As Wheeler would walk, and fill her pockets with funny, interesting things she would anticipate returning to the studio to catalog them in boxes. For example, one box is full of "Things Round," others contain "Things Spikey," and "Things with lots of layers." At one point, in a previous studio, she said she had a wall of "Things Wonderful," including found objects that defied more specific categorization, things given to her by friends or little formal experiments she would conduct. Back at her house, Wheeler showed me a tray of rocks she has been amassing. Their commonality was that each contained a circle shape or had a natural ellipse within it. The subtlety of her eye and her sensitivity to nuances in these rocks seemed unusually delicate and almost obsessively particular.

A body of work from 1998 called *Unsuccessful Interactions with Nature*, evolved from Wheeler's walking and collecting process. Constructed from a range of industrial materials, this is a series of plant tableaux installed against a wall. Each piece asks the viewer to turn a crank, squeeze a rubber bulb or lift a lever which in turn makes a plant blossom or bud unfold. "Here I extend my ideas of community," Wheeler said, "exploring the notion that perhaps if our bodies are called upon to engage with an object, perhaps we will engage for that extra minute or two, and our spirit will follow. Using objects that exist in our everyday lives, I am asking the viewer to re-examine the simplest of objects in a different way." Every artist has moments of epiphany where something triggers or clarifies one's direction. For Wheeler, one such moment was a Joseph Beuys exhibit she stumbled upon in Paris six years ago. One wall, from floor to ceiling, contained his drawings. Wheeler said she was knocked out by them. "I was amazed at how open he was, how uninhibited the drawings were in their badness." This inspired Wheeler to begin using a sketchbook to store ideas and as a tool for self-reflection. She carries it with her at all times and it is fat with messy writing, "things pasted and saved," rough sketches or notated thoughts. Beuys also was instrumental in laying out a groundwork for Wheeler's comprehensive approach to art making and her fluidity among media. His own practice embraced performance, installation, pedagogy, theory, and political activism and embodied a ceaseless examination of ideas and ideals. Wheeler also looks to contemporary artists such as Annette Messager, Andy Goldsworthy, Gabriel Orozco, Sara Sze, filmmaker Ruth Leitman and Mass Art colleagues such as Joe Wood and Jill Slosberg-Ackerman as artists who reflect her own interests.

Wheeler's other tool for generating ideas and developing projects is a performance group to which she belongs. The latter, initially organized by Victor McSurely of the *Blue Man Group*, was a collective of artists, musicians, writers, and performers, meets bi-monthly to do improvisational art/theater exercises. Wheeler recalls one of her favorite "productions: "We divided a room in half by a curtain. Ten people on one half stood looking at a large painting and they had to describe it to the people on the other side who then had to paint a facsimile of it, based on their instructions. It

above
A revolving oak leaf, 2000
ink on paper

was fascinating because it was all about perception and understanding. The finished painting looked nothing like the original." During another meeting, Wheeler was handed a red box with the word "EARTH" printed on it. Inside was a rock, which she was supposed to use to create a narrative about outer space. The image of the rock in a box lodged somewhere meaningful and her current body of work has developed around that idea.

A beach walk in Westport provided the right rock. It had enough density, and enough interesting planes to give it identity without making it an object of beauty. "The rock is a blank canvas in a way, void of associations, yet full," she says. She pulls the rock out of a box and hands it to me. This rock is indeed very average. I realize she was not looking for a rock with specificity or even of character, she was looking for quintessential rockness.

She sent the rock to California to have a 3-D scan made. She fed the scan into her computer and instructed it to unfold the rock, dissect and reconstruct it. She sliced it in different spots until a certain formal pattern resonated with her. She points to one print-out of the rock cleaved in two and runs her finger down the line where the halves meet. "This," she says, "is such a beautiful line." It suggests both a boundary and a synthesis. She then creates a "fossil-like form" to implant within the rock, altering its course with her own intervention. More and more Wheeler said she feels a need to put her hand into the mechanization, giving it the stamp of artistic license, to become the creator.

When she's satisfied with an image, she will return the computer design to a company for "rapid prototyping," which actually creates a 3-D print of the object in a cornstarch and glue medium. This process, she says, is mostly used in forming prototypes for industry. Wheeler then must decide what kind of casts to make from the prototype and what to do with the computer generated drawings. On this day in her studio she is experimenting with transferring the rock drawings to metal plates, then giving the plate a slight electric charge which will adhere hot pink flocking to the lines. I have to admit, I have trouble envisioning these fuzzy pink schematics of rocks. She later wrote "It worked. They look just like I hoped."

With the diversity of her art making approaches, I had to ask Wheeler why she continues to categorize herself as a metalsmith. "I guess I don't," she responded. "I consider myself an artist or a generalist. I'm afraid if I assign myself a category I will be limiting myself. However, I adore the materials of copper, brass, nickel, and silver mostly because they are materials that hold a plane, that you can wrestle with, that fight back, and that you can work and rework in your own time. And the process, a deeply meditative one, seems to captivate me, hold my scattered attention for a time. But truthfully, I work with ideas first, then try to find the proper material to get them across. I feel confident in a number of materials, and metals often seem the most suitable. I guess I have a profound appreciation for those people who have studied metalsmithing for years and years and have trained with master metalsmiths. I happen to not have gone that route, but sometimes feed off of those who did."

In the end, the category doesn't matter. It is the process that counts, and Wheeler is very clear on this point. "I look at art making as an act of faith. For example, when you begin a project from nothing, the blank canvas, you work and work until you achieve the it-ness of a piece. Grinding your way through until the object or idea "works" or "resonates." All the moments leading up to that point I see as acts of faith." ■

Debra Brehmer is a writer who lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was a founding editor of *Art Muscle* magazine.

above
Carex veris, 1995
sterling, chrysobéril, emanel, verveil
1.12 x 2.84"

Josée Desjardins: The Intuitive Path

text by Barbara Isherwood

Five-year plans are not in the cards for Josée Desjardins. The Montreal-based jewellery artist navigates by a subconscious compass, that over the past fifteen years has led her through the creation of a body of highly inventive work.

Instinct has been a subtle guide throughout Desjardins's creative life. As a teen growing up in Hull, Quebec, she was intrigued by the sight of someone making jewellery, and began working with leather and beads. A friend enrolled in a jewellery course introduced her to the possibilities of working in metal, and at age seventeen, she began commuting once a week to Montreal, to take a course in jewellery techniques at École de joaillerie et des métaux d'art de Montreal (EJMAM). After a year of full-time studies at an art school in Hull, she moved to Montreal to pursue jewellery seriously at EJMAM. She recalls her decision as being entirely intuitive. "It was just something I had to do." (Conversation: 1999)

above
Repressed Desire Series: How can you release the torrent?, 1999
sterling, enamel, vermeil, pebbles, carnelian, siliconized tile grout, epoxy varnish
$1\ 1/8 \times 2\ 1/32$"

In her earliest work, design and technique were the dominant concerns. "Jewellery demands technical skills, so when you start, you're really conscious of those aspects," she points out. Her technical prowess and design savvy were recognized in competitions and exhibitions throughout the 1980s.

By the start of the next decade however, Desjardins's artistic vision was becoming less process-oriented, as ideas began to take the driver's seat. A longstanding attraction to natural forms emerged in jewellery that incorporated organic materials such as pebbles and wheat. In 1992 she attended an enamelling symposium in Limoges, France, and as a result added vibrant colour to her visual vocabulary.

It was around this time, Desjardins recalls, that "new shapes began to appear on paper like magic." Noting that these concoctions resembled "fake plants," she decided they needed taxonomical names and histories. Thus was born the *Imaginary Herbarium*, the series that was to establish Desjardins as a jeweller of serious creative powers.

"I walk a lot. I stride endlessly down lanes and alleyways. I sit in strange places. I watch, while bizarre plants grow: Round little mushrooms the colour of anthracite. Little cylinders, brilliantly dappled, reflecting sheen and gloss...."

Research for the *Herbarium* included collecting natural specimens such as rocks, seeds, sea urchins and dried plants, and visiting the Museum of Natural History in Montreal, who gave her complete access to their vaults, allowing her to make moulds of specimens such as fossils or coral.

While in the end Desjardins used very few of these for jewellery, they did provide much inspiration. The earrings *Iberis obstousa* are pierced hollow forms based on seedpods, dangling from coloured stone "flowers." So delicate in appearance are they, that one expects them to be carried away by the slightest breeze. That sense of implied movement is prevalent throughout the series. The brooch *Cleome asarum* appears ready to squiggle away, while the gaping jaws of the ring *Appa pratens* threaten to gnaw fingers that get too close.

The fictitious surround of the *Herbarium* was animated by a performance event, staged in Montreal and Toronto. (Performance: 1998) Garbed in a green leotard entwined with leaves, dancer and author Jacques Falquet performed a sinuous ballet, with projections of natural splendours as a backdrop. The dance was followed by a illustrated travelogue, in which Desjardins recounted in poetic terms her hunt for the rare "specimens" that comprise the *Herbarium*.

"I walk a lot. I stride endlessly down lanes and alleyways. I sit in strange places. I watch, while bizarre plants grow: Round little mushrooms the colour of anthracite. Little cylinders, brilliantly dappled, reflecting sheen and gloss....

I wander, randomly but not aimlessly: I am looking for what seduces me. I seek the ravaged, the incongruous, the uprooted. The survivors." (Conversation: 1999)

The lecture continued with accounts of the physical properties and uses of the various "plants." These charming "histories," written by Falquet, follow the model of the traditional herbarium, which combined scientific fact and folk tradition. *Picea lobelia*'s red centre emits a pleasant aroma, and it is used in perfumes, and also for chewing tobacco. *Eruca sativa* functions as a clock, closing at noon — in certain regions of France, peasants time their midday meal by its habits. The various species of *Obstousa* perform both supernatural and quotidian functions — in China, they are used to ward off demons, as well as to chase away bedbugs.

Desjardins was surprised and excited by Falquet's inventions, and found the faux histories had a dramatic impact on the way the pieces were perceived, by herself as well as others. To complete the fiction, Desjardins painted botanical watercolours that "document" each piece. In addition to being beautiful objects of adornment, the multi-layered *Herbarium* transports us to a delightful mythical space, where fantasy, whimsy, artistry, and nature freely mingle.

While it is tempting to view the *Herbarium* as a "breakthrough," Desjardins resists this notion, positing instead a less linear view of the creative process — "it's more like being a bird, flying above things, flying toward things that attract you, and you fly from one thing to another."

Thus while she was working on the final pieces in the *Herbarium*, she was also developing the *Hommage* medallion series, a group of works inspired by heraldic shields seen on a trip to England. One of the first to emerge was *Tristeza no mata* ("sadness doesn't kill"), a pendant commemorating Mexican painter Frida Kahlo. It was Kahlo's perseverance and *joie de vivre*, despite all of her physical and emotional struggles, that touched Desjardins. "She was a complex person with many different elements, and therefore a very attractive subject for me."

The main element of this work is an anatomically shaped heart in silver, the top of which is punctuated by holes that suggest veins and arteries, while also providing passage for the chain. Looped through one pair of holes is a strip of blood red leather, evoking the artist's fiery nature. Suspended from the heart is an elaborately cuffed silver hand that clasps a banner inscribed with the titular motto, reminiscent of the text in Mexican ex-voto paintings.

The heart is an ideal emblem for Kahlo. A popular motif in Mexican folk art, which she admired and collected, it also reminds us of her obsession with her own damaged body, which was often the subject of her paintings. It may also symbolize Kahlo's many love affairs, including her long and tempestuous relationship with fellow painter Diego Rivera.

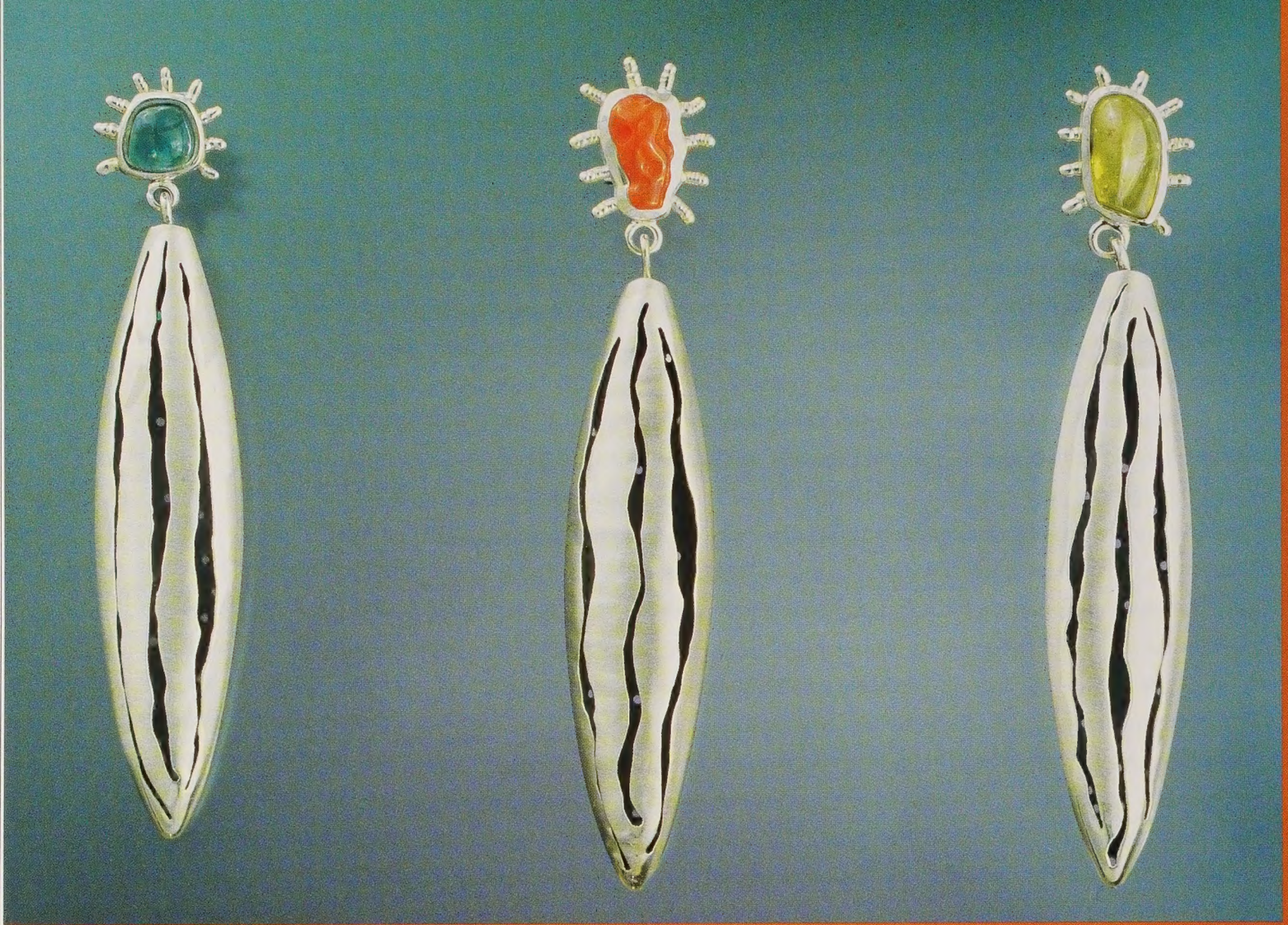
Desjardins's exploration of psychological terrain moves to familial turf in the *Family Shields* series. These unusual objects, which the artist refers to as "medallions," hang from the finger by means of an attached ring, and are meant to be grasped in the palm. The unorthodox structure, which brings to mind other objects that are held in the hand, such as rosaries, fetishes or worry beads, relates to the motto inscribed on each sterling silver band, *de ira egressa est tranquillitas* ("from anger comes inner peace"). Desjardins was thinking of a fist clenched in anger, an emotion her family has a tendency to harbour.

Referring as they do to psychic states rather than the organic world, the *Family Shields* are more abstract, and less decorative, than the pieces in the *Herbarium*. Although framed within the context of a series, each shield has a strong individual character, as befits a work inspired by a human versus a vegetable source. Selecting the particular materials for each medallion without consciously examining her motives, Desjardins found the pieces came together easily. "These works arise from the artistic unconscious, and I don't question their arrival."

The unexpected and intriguing combinations of materials excite the eye, and pique the curiosity — one finds oneself drawn into speculation as to their meaning. *Father, Guy* is a highly polished silver ovoid, perforated by enamelled holes and inset with fragments of broken china — a hard exterior pierced by areas of fragility. In *Mother, Claire*, a smooth marble sphere suggests a dependable, but possibly unbending nature. *Brother, Pierre* is a ball of dark green fluorite studded with red rubber points, evoking the qualities of flexibility, and earthiness. At the core of *Sister* is a jagged gypsum crystal that is contained by an oxidized silver cage, rimmed with red felt, like a bundle of raw energy, held in check.

For Desjardins, the *Family Shields* perform a cathartic role, by becoming more aware of her inherited propensity to succumb to anger, she hopes to free herself from this trait. The demanding physical aspect of the shields, this isn't jewellery you put on your body and forget about, heightens their ability to serve as an agent for change.

Adding transformative purpose to decoration, Desjardins's recent works are, in her words, "jewellery objects designed to induce a process of awakening and regaining consciousness." She



TAïAUT!TAYAUT!

VANITÉ

opposite page top
Iberis obstousa, 1996
sterling, chrysobéril, apatite, fire opal
3 1/5 x 5/8"

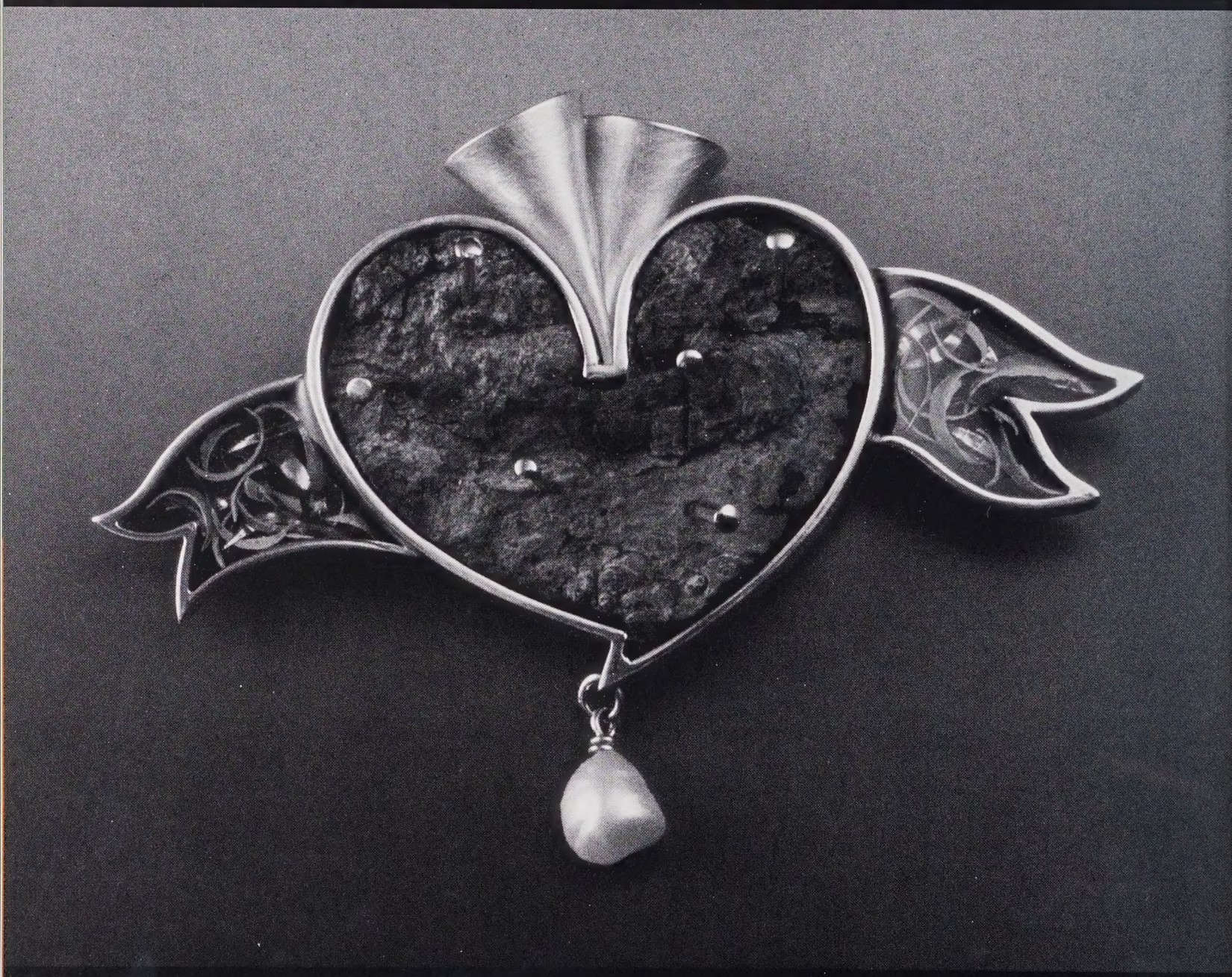
opposite page bottom left
Taiut! Tayaut!, 1999
sterling, 24k, enamel, plastic dog toy
3 5/8 x 2"

opposite page bottom right
Vanity, 1999
sterling, plastic dog's toy
1 2/3 x 2 2/3"

above left
Mother, Claire, 1999
sterling, marble
26 x 1 2/5"

above right
Father, Guy, 1999
sterling, enamel, broken china
2 2/3 x 1 5/8"

left
Picea lobella, 1995
sterling, 18k, chrysoprase
2 2/3 x 7/8"



above
Talisman Series: Give Thanks, 1999
sterling, 18k, 24k, pearl, finger nail clippings, epoxy resin
2.4 x 3.2"

chooses the word "object" to emphasize the link between her current practice and the historical tradition of creating objects invested with a sense of sacredness or power. In the brooch *Give Thanks*, from the *Gris Gris* series, the fingernail clippings of a close friend are set in resin, alongside shavings of gold (one thinks of traditional fetish pouches or *mojos*, which often contain plant or animal parts believed to embody the life force of the entity from which they came). Desjardins's offering is set in a silver frame in the shape of a stylized, winged heart. At the centre, a resinous mass resembling mysterious organic matter is pierced by gold pins.

The artist confirms the talismanic function of *Give Thanks*. "The intent is to honour and aid the individual. They're like voodoo pieces, although it's risky to say that. But that's what I feel." Flying in the face of our jaded culture of disbelief, Desjardins responds to the deeply rooted human need to express affairs of the spirit through material means — it is not surprising to learn that she loves to create wedding rings. "I try to make the ring of their dreams." As one who invests her jewellery with faith and emotion, she is ideally poised to do the job.

Desjardins's fascination with the potency and mystery of passion finds expression in her *Repressed Desire* series. Inside the ring *To understand all in a single life* is the portion of a goldenrod plant that acts as a receptacle for insect eggs. "This represents the desire," says Desjardins, who describes this series as being about "inner and outer realms."

How can you release this torrent? contains eucalyptus, whose scent wafts through a small space between the vermeil-plated, flower-shaped cap and the enamelled container that forms the crown of the ring. The fragrant particle, enticing, yet out of reach, is a silent metaphor for the joy and frustration of desire. The heady drama is balanced by Desjardins's exuberant aesthetic, which pairs a colourfully enamelled silver ring with a "jewel" of white-coloured siliconized tile grout, embedded with pebbles and carnelians, and varnished to a gloss.

Like the *Family Shields*, the pieces in the *Repressed Desire* series have an aggressive physical presence. The rings are large and bulbous; the pendant *Time Spent Without Me Is Time Lost* encompasses the length of the torso. To don these items requires a willingness to participate in the process of discovery that the artist has initiated.

Desjardins sees this active engagement of the body as leading her in the direction of performance art, which she views as a logical extension of her jewellery. Marrying ritual and object, she seeks to build a bridge from ego to id. When presented with such a beautiful path, who could resist setting forth on the journey? ■

Barbara Isherwood is a Toronto-based writer on visual arts and craft, and editor of MAGazine, the quarterly publication of the Metal Arts Guild of Ontario.

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Conversation between the artist and author, May 26, 1999 (my thanks to Judith Barry for translating from French to English), and a lecture by Desjardins to students at the Ontario College of Art, February 10, 1998.

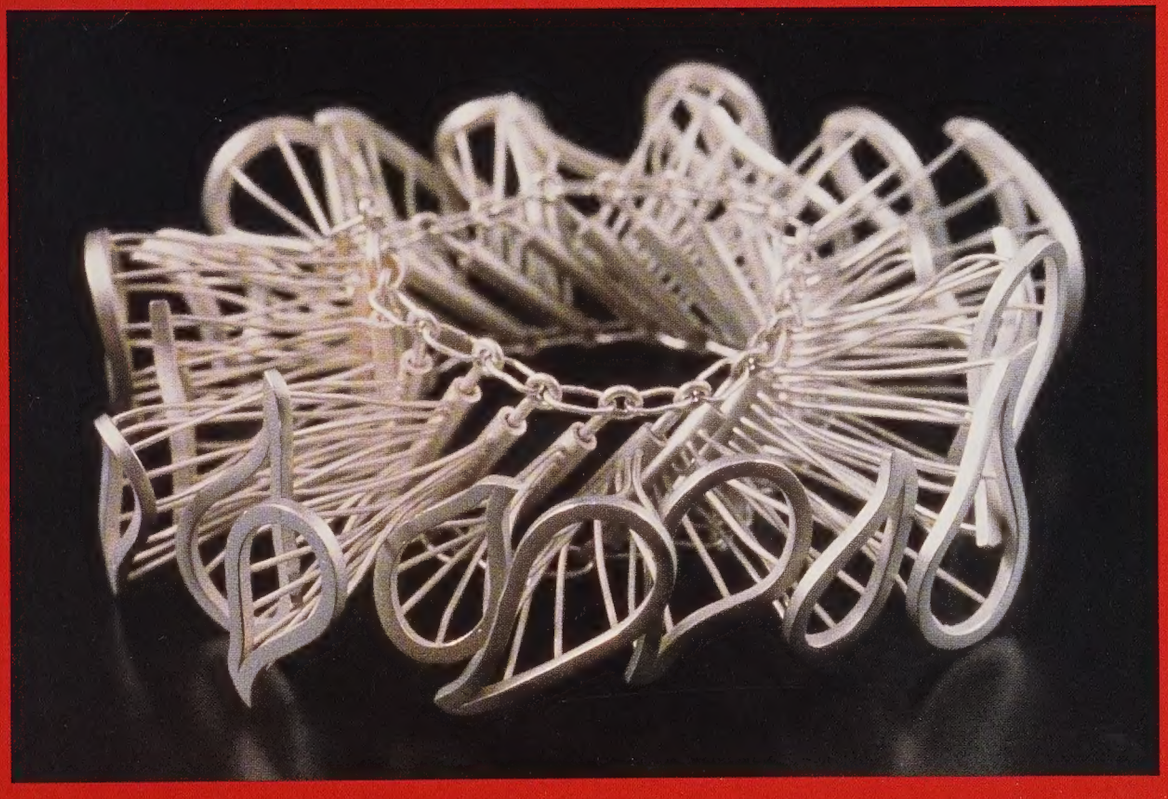
Desjardins, Josée. *Herbarium Revisisted/L'Herbier Imaginaire*, Toronto: 1980.

Toronto performance, staged February 6, 1998, Ontario College of Art

above
Sherry Simms
Camouflaged: Creamy Beige Make–up, 2000
Copper, enamel paint, plaster, synthetic pearls, make–up
4 x 2 1/4 x 1/4"

Vanity of Vanities

text by Michal Ann Carley



above
Tina Rath
Dynastic Ruff, 1998
sterling silver
5 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 2"

Many would agree that almost any Western form of embellishment of the body purposefully serves the vanity of the wearer. Relatedly, as social anthropologists and cultural historians have taught us, it also functions as an indexical sign of status and position across the globe. Indeed, adornment is as structurally necessary to the evolution and sustenance of a culture as is language, knit linguistically into the chain of signification. However, most of us are schooled in the lessons of living the pious and virtuous life with aphorisms such as: "Vanity of vanities, saith the teacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity," (Ecclesiastes 1:2.) In the context of adornment, we might see vanity as merely self-conceit, the desire for admiration. It appears to be somewhat of a ontological quagmire then to assert society's necessity for — letting alone the desire for and pleasure in — adornment while simultaneously bespeaking and reproaching it as a symptom or sign of vanity.

Piety notwithstanding, this paradox suggests that it is precisely the act, process, and/or manifestation of embellishment and embellishing that are the genesis of culture and art themselves. It is the raw, essential material cooked into an artifact that not only embellishes and adorns, but also facilitates and evidences devotion, nostalgia, commemoration, or lamentation. These are culturally necessary rituals that at once require and sustain the attribute or ornament to enact them. The ornament acts as social marker that gives meaning to the culturally defined ritual.

In the early twentieth century, social anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss sought to map the mythos of all cultures onto a diachronic diagram of polarities in order to find correlative structures and beliefs amongst all peoples. These binary concepts, such as raw/cooked, nature/culture, emotion/reason, and incest/taboo, were presented as the natural and governing laws of the human condition; ones which made antipodal distinctions between the states, yet held them in structural tension–one can't exist without the other. This establishes a relational alterity between these concepts, that the presence or perception of one by necessity must invoke the perception of the other. Perhaps we can add to Lévi-Strauss's structuralist diagram the concepts of "humility/vanity." At the moment one acquires an awareness of self one enters the relational web of culture and language (psychoanalytically, Freud's Oedipal crisis and Lacan's mirror stage.) In this light, it is through the process of embellishment that we enter into culture and the artifact in relation to our bodies signifies and marks our presence. (Again psychoanalytically, the process is the masquerade and the embellishment is the fetish.)

...it is through the process of embellishment that we enter into culture and the artifact in relation to our bodies signifies and marks our presence.

Adornment — things that we apply to or onto our bodies — and the utility of adornment, which affords both a sense of amplification or transformation of the self and the construction of social codes between persons, are the pithy subjects of investigation by a number of courageous contemporary metalsmiths. Not content to produce jewelry that is innocuous in its aesthetic and posture, nor dependent on the intrinsic value of the metal or gems to bestow status, these artists reflect on the concept and function of adornment itself. The objects that they produce manifest the slippery divide of nature/culture and humility/vanity, making us ever more aware of the power and pleasure of embellishment.

Adornment and its social implications used to be explicit. Both Western and Nonwestern cultures abound with examples. A fertile period wherein essentially all attire was indexically signed was the late nineteenth century. Women of the *haute bourgeoisie* were conscripted to an array of coded accoutrements: their bustle; hankies; length, breadth, style, and color of their skirts; floridness of their face; type, material, and amount of jewelry and ribbons; their chatelaine; calling cards; and their poesy carrier. One could immediately ascertain the woman's marital status by the size of her bustle, her economic and social position by the type and contents of her chatelaine, and her current temperament by the flower she carried in her poesy holder. The clout of these embellishments was intentionally meant to allude interpretation, to confer import schematically and directly, to signify without mediation. While Victorian and Edwardian codes were forcibly overdetermained, in our era one still recognizes the grey pinstriped suit, the karat, and the SUV as classed social markers, even though they are often met with a disdain by the hoi polloi. The radicals or antiestablishment also posture, though generally with more creativity, and embellish with their own markers, fashion and creative expression, but markers nonetheless. What has provoked a shift in perception and enactment from the late nineteenth century, which exemplified and displayed the crisis of modernity, was society's move into a pluralistic, postmodern age (also termed post-capitalist and schizophrenic.) One which is [ill]defined more by the exception than the rule.

Adornment can no longer *denote* position, rank, or taste. Now as it exists and is used it *connotes* irregularly, posturing, referring, and demurring at once. It can not be counted upon to provide us with clear or explicit meaning; it accedes to both looking out and looking within, to posture and

display and reflect and critique synchronically. The complex that is "vanity" must now be vaguely termed and found partially in the supplement. Craig Owens posits that; "it [the supplement] is not simple addition; it also supplants. Both an increment and substitute it plays a compensatory role."

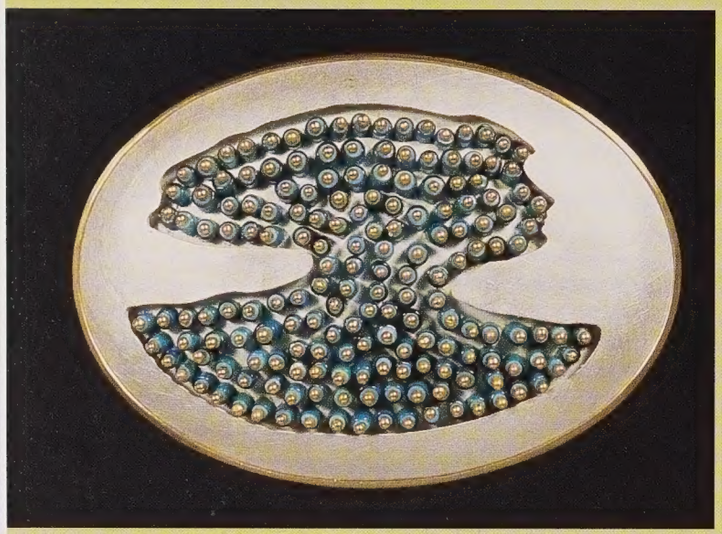
The discourses of fashion and embellishment as markers of power, of identity, and of inculcation have been elucidated by scholars, but it is in the objects of art themselves, both the historical artifacts and the contemporary expressions, that the discourse, the alterity of humility/vanity, comes into view. The corporal object itself can contain and thus connote multiple signifiers. The object alone is capable of the state of being other. Pushing beyond mere decoration and fashion, a number of artists create objects meant to supplant vanity, that which is extrinsic. Their work is often an attempt to shift and slide into a knowing vanity–the coming into culture–though through one that depends on humility, which is intrinsic. These artists recognize the compensatory role of adornment, one that at once announces its own contingency and, in that, satisfies.

Heather White borrows the crown as an emblematic trope from history. Interested especially in the objects that appear as attributes to prefects, both royal and military, and ecumenical objects that enact the liturgy, White siphons from these objects what she terms an "iconic residue." Of course one can't wear a crown in 2001 without their tongue in their cheek, and it is exactly this anachronism, this distance from the source, that allows for circumspection. White's series titled *Retractable Crowns* suspends four variations on arms that expand, contract, and hover the crowns at various head–levels. To extend the arm and then stand beneath mockingly replays Napoleon's self coronation. It is telling that these retractable arms are also those used to position magnifying mirrors for self viewing/examining.

These objects are crowns in name and shape, which regulate their appearance and meaning. It is the materials from which they are fabricated that extend and challenge those meanings. *Knowledge* takes the shape of an 18th-century, Age of Enlightenment, platform crown, but here its architectural structure is completed by a ring of books, texts that turn inward and are unable to be read. *Domain* is a headpiece of mordent grass encircled by a metal picket fence with fiercely pointed finials atop each. These works mean as they are worn, ascribing to the wearer an ornament of importance while sequestering that inference in mundane materials. The works reflect back on presumed authority, the iconic residue, that still can fuel relationships of power, and propose a simultaneous constraint and transcendence in its examination.

Another study of historical adornment has brought White to her current series, *Protean Cameos*. Originally worn as amulets, cameos depicted a mythical figure who provided protection. The portrait busts revealed a specificity and nuance of the subject through the exquisite relief carving of shell and stone. By the Victorian era, cameos became common, ubiquitous ornaments. Made of molded glass paste, the vernacular portraits represented an ethereal, frail, female type, with the pale and translucent complexion of belladonnaed debutantes. No longer an amulet to protect against harm, the cameo came to name and assert the anonymous "docile body," as characterized by Michel Foucault: "the body [is] totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction upon the body." Worn upon the body of the Victorian woman, the cameo became yet another coded affirmation of her constrained existence.

Protean Cameos, as the name suggests, are cameos reshaped and mutated from the original and subsequent sources. While they retain the aura of the prior, these have been hollowed–out, literally and metaphorically. The former vernacular portrait with little specificity has now become merely a female silhouette, one that defines through absence. The series of silhouettes progress through twelve stages of increasing deformity, stretched and adapted into elongated ovoids of silver. White then activates the silhouettes' interiors, supplanting the portrait–space with organized patterns of pearls, cabochons, coral, or glass backed with velvet. In another group, White imbeds fabricated objects in the interior spaces, renaming and recharging the mutated, absent portraits with emblems



that only begin to suggest meaning. In either case, figure and ground metonymically slip into/onto each other, as do the notions of protection, representation, selfhood, and decorative/decorating.

While the Victorians and Edwardians are ripe for critique, laden as they were with the sublimated anxieties of the last *fin de siécle*, our current end of the century offers up critiques of its own. Artist Sherry Simms interrogates the seduction of the media, fashion, and cosmetic industry by which many people feel captive. Also appropriating the cameo form, Simms sculpts the cosmetic material itself into the portrait body. Demonstrating the clear artifice of "make up," these dangling necklaces attest to the labor-intensive activity of making beauty. In her discussion of obedience to the dictates of fashion, Susan Bordo asserts: " [the] prevailing forms of selfhood and subjectivity are maintained not through physical restraint and coercion, but through individual self-surveillance and self–correction to norms." Simms makes corporeal this self-correction in her satirical objects that push toward the absurd. *Brush*, made of genuine hair, plaster, enamel paint, and copper is a raucous exaggeration of the cosmetic, finishing powder brush. Leaving an ample swath of black pigment that recalls the aberrant mask of "black face" minstrels and fashioning a handle that resembles clotted and pimpled golf balls/testicles, Simms creates objects that make poignantly hilarious the extents to which we alter ourselves to conform to norms.

While some artists are interested predominately in the social role of embellishment, Jan Baum is engaged with the intimate and personal as the object of adornment interacts with both the body and spirit. The long–drop pendants that, in her words, speak the "overriding language of protection" are in the form of plumb bobs, pendulums, and cocoons. Each has a clear inside and outside, an evocative containment that requests examination. Somatic shells of ornament and metal bars form classically simple shields for the interior spaces that are sometimes filled with the particularly mundane, yet transformative element, salt. Both the weight and the swing of the pendant against the body suggest the plodding cadence of a metronome, but because one's body moves irregularly, the form begins to move in arching sweeps, asserting both its strength and its character. *Memorare (inspired by Angela's Ashes)* contains four such pendants that are held within a box lined with dictionary pages, superimposed with copper scrollwork. One locket is a fecund, formed droplet of salt that appears barely contained. The other three are 18k yellow-gold simple, vessel–shaped armatures that amply hold silver pebbles in the shape of raisins. The reference to transformation is implicit and explicit in this suite: the anticipated potential of the salt to dissipate in time and wear and the already vanquished, sweet juice of the fattened grapes leaving only shriveled remainders. Baum chooses these forms, materials, and patterns of ornament to function as metaphors for transcendence and moral virtues such as faith, generosity, and strength.

Since the absolute itself has been questioned by society, artists have been intrigued with those things that belie immutability, examining, fabricating, and fetishizing those objects that embody process, change, and potentially, transcendence. Artists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century voraciously collected objects from their recently colonized worlds, feeling (due to ignorance and imperialism) that these objects were imbued with prelinguistic and magical capacities that defied Western orthodoxy. The first Surrealist exhibition, *Exposition Surréalist d'objects* in 1936 displayed in metonymic fashion hardened volcanic ash, carnivorous plants, crystals, sculptures and masks from Oceania, the Americas, and Africa, and objects of art made by Picasso, Oppenheim, and Duchamp, among others. What all of these objects had in common was that they were seen as transformative, unfixed, constantly in flux. Their potential for meaning, experience, art, and culture was unlimited and sublime. This evocatively pregnant nature of some objects, materials, and forms continues to inspire artists into the twenty-first century. Artist Sarah Hood makes ornament that defies fixity, that transforms from one state to another. Not only the materials, but also the objects as social markers are transformed.

Hood has long been immersed in French literary theory that examines writing and language as a

top left
Heather White
Protean Cameo # 6
18k gold, glass beads, sterling silver
$1\,7/8 \times 2\,5/8 \times 1/2"$

top right
Jan Baum
Memorare (inspired by Angela's Ashes), 1999
detail: raisin pendants
18k yellow gold, sterling silver
$1 \times 7/16 \times 7/16"$

bottom left
Heather White
Protean Cameo # 2
18k yellow gold, green onyx, sterling silver
$4 \times 1 \times 1/2"$

bottom right
Jan Baum
Memorare (inspired by Angela's Ashes), 1999
view of inside
18k yellow gold, sterling silver, salt, steel, wood, chalkboard paint, copper, flocking
$10 \times 7 \times 1\,1/4"$

top
Sarah Hood
Three Rings from Structural Series #1: Decomposition, 1999
sterling silver, chinese lantern pods, enamel, fine silver
1.5 x 1 x 1" each

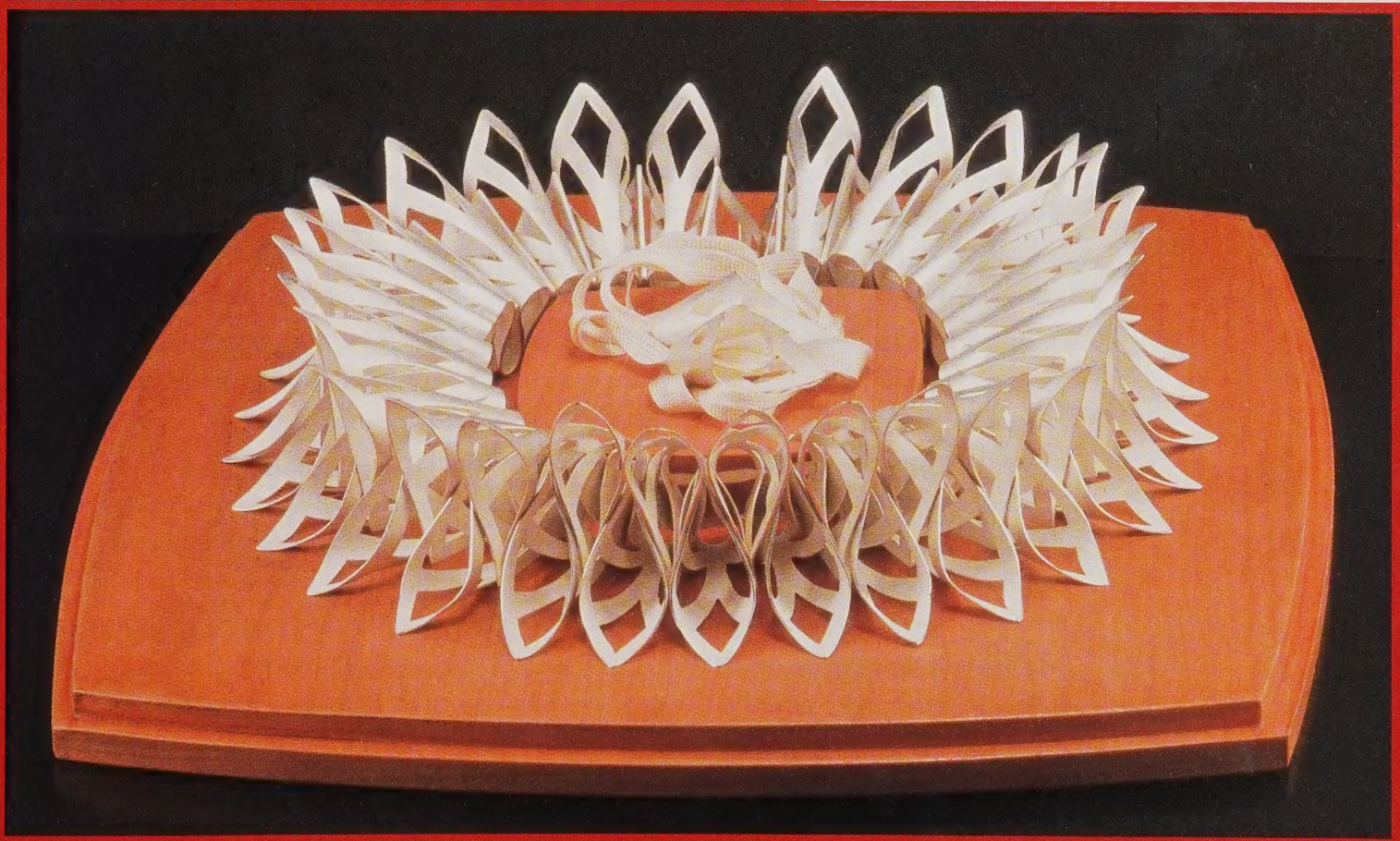
bottom left
Elizabeth Brim
Camisole, 1999
mild steel

bottom right
Sarah Hood
Fragment from Structural Series #2: Deconstruction, 1999
sterling silver, 18k gold
7 x 6 x $^{1}/_{2}$"

left
Molly Carter
A Pair of Feather Skirts, 1999
steel, silk, rooster and turkey tail feathers
96 x 36 x 32" each

below right
Kate Wagle
Formal Exercise, detail, 1999

bottom
Tina Rath
Collar for Isabella, 2000
sterling silver, silk, wood



mechanism and artifact of culture. Poststructuralist theory recognized the failure of Structuralism to codify and make certain meaning and relationships–between concepts, words, and ultimately, societal behavior. Hood is intrigued by this instability and impermanence. Her *Structural Series #1: Decomposition* attaches botanical elements such as leaves, flowers, or pods as the ornament to sterling silver structures, which hold the elements onto the body of the wearer. When worn, they are worn away. An altered form with only nascent residue supplies a meaning and value that shifts and lies perhaps only in a decayed memory. *Fragment from Structural Series #2: Deconstruction* is a linear composition of silver and gold marks and arcs. Again alluding to transience, this neckpiece suggest at once the elemental and the decayed, looking both like an essential ribbed infrastructure that is the genesis of growth and the remainder left after when a plant is dormant. Hood likens these simplified forms to a gestural drawing, one that does not represent but rather, responds.

Also interested in the transmutability of matter and ethereal shifts in reference from one material to the next is Molly Carter. A sculptor and printmaker, Carter uses gigantic scale and startling juxtapositions of materials to create her installations. Each of her works is a fantastical woman's garment, constructed and displayed in a manner that speaks of sensuality and repression, of intoxicating freedom and confinement. *A Pair of Feather Skirts* is an installation of two towering steel crinolines that are mounted onto the wall; the hoops suspended only inches from the ground. Each skirt is filled with white rooster and turkey feathers to the point of excess, erupting beyond polite demeanor and boundaries. These skirts again recall "docile bodies." In 1792 Mary Wollstonecroft described the domestic/domesticated woman: ". . . genteel women are, literally speaking, slaves to their bodies, and glory in their subjection. . . . Taught in their infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body and, roaming round its gilt cage, only to seek its prison." Carter welds her monumental cage/crinolines of steel, making the sense of the imprisoned feminine contemporary and acute. The gigantic size, especially in its duplication, makes the viewer uncomfortably aware of a sense of foreboding, unable to yield to the visual and tactile seduction of the soft, white tower.

". . . genteel women are, literally speaking, slaves to their bodies, and glory in their subjection. . . . Taught in their infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body and, roaming round its gilt cage, only to seek its prison."

Objects can evoke a myriad of responses in a person. According to "object relations" theory, psychologists teach us that self-selected objects can produce comfort in an anxious or agitated person when the object is made the focus of a personal ritual. The baby's lambskin, chicken soup, the rosary, or the amulet, apart from their presumed magical power, can soothe and comfort one in distress. Kate Wagle makes objects that appear as if they were a part of a calming or devotional ritual, but they also reference the vernacular objects used in anonymous public rituals that stand–in for our private experience. Folded and unfolded handkerchiefs and patterns and shapes derived from mourning jewelry are borrowed from funerary rituals of grief and loss. *Ex votes, relicarios*, and *milagros* are Latin Catholic offerings of thanksgiving and pleas for protection. Flower corsages mark rites of passage for women and girls. These forms are manipulated and exaggerated by Wagle, expanding their resonance as objects that assist in our awareness of self.

Taking tea in the afternoon, a time for reflection and calm, is a social ceremony of high culture. *Formal Exercise*, 1999, a tony teacup and saucer evoke just such a ritual. The cup is fabricated of five segments of Wagle's signature die–formed and embossed, sheetmetal topiary that has been shaped and fitted together to form the vessel. Each segment arcs inward and at its top, the pattern erupts into an irregular edge of tiny leaves. To call the disk–form, on which the cup sits a saucer, is a misnomer. Heavy and industrial–looking, the disk is precisely round and flat and is impregnated (planted?) with carved Lucite roses. One feels a deception at work here: a cup which can not comfortably be drunk out of, a vessel that because of its inward incline pronounces its emptiness, and a simple flat saucer that defies the pomp of the cup.

Most of Wagle's work has been about desiring and mourning. "For what?" one might ask. She seeks exactitude when, even in our advanced technological age, there can be none. She desires perfection while knowing that perfection is only a construction of archaic philosophers and theologians. She alludes to the concept of timelessness, which betrays our desire to halt time. Topiaries are cultivated, thus contained, living forms. Timepieces reenact a rhythmic ritual of lifting, holding, and pushing to unlock and name the passage of time. Roses, so quintessential they are cliché, embody our longing for and celebration of the Other. These are the recurrent motifs in Wagle's work. Our private rituals and their objects that adorn and signify our subjecthood are denuded, made pubic, and are finally insufficient comfort. Kate Wagle's work foregrounds vanity's insufficiency by loading it with reference, and provokes an inward turn.

Elizabeth Brim also depicts apparel and fashion accoutrements. Exacting in their verisimilitude, *Camisole, Tu Tu*, and *Apron* are life–size sculptures that serve to ironically displace the sentimental and erotic connotations of each coded piece of sexualized women's clothing. The forged mild steel works wrench artifice off of our bodies, making it no longer wearable. Its heightened materiality, each wrinkle and gracious curve formed by the contours of a woman's body, palpably becomes rigid. The explosion of drapery made of the seemingly intractable material of steel is disconcerting and off-putting. The viewer is forced into an irrevocable position, both knowing and thus wanting the familiar tu tu and its associations. The bait and switch is an annoying gimmick, but in Brim's hands and craftsmanship there is a bridge. The work's believability coupled with its false promises forms the structural tension that awakens us. Brim exploits a pop sensibility, but from the distance of an artist examining the social accoutrements of womanhood.

Foregoing any direct social critique while presenting an unguarded and hyperbolic decadence, Tina Rath reinscribes history's excesses in her boxed collars and bracelets. Rath designs each of her pieces based in part on the historical flourishes of costume worn by the aristocracy from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries. Specifically, collars as elaborately articulated folds of luxurious cloth. A connoisseur can at once identify iconographically the significance and denoted expectations in regard to each flourish. Rath's *Collar for Isabella* is an undulating accordion ring of cut sterling silver that intricately interweaves and folds into an expansively circuitous collar. Emphasizing its role and position as presentation and display, it sits upon a carefully crafted box/pedestal. Of course these collars, charged by their commanding excess and sumptuous curves, read as robustly as attractors as do peacocks' tales. Since the dawn of time, "all sexual selection tends to emphasize, perfect, and exaggerate certain qualities. Pronounced attractors signify greater fitness to survive. While the crisis of overpopulation for this new century does not deem the need for sexual attractors, evolutionary development has yet to catch up. Tina Roth's pieces exemplify an exuberance as befits vanity. ■

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OBSERVATIONS

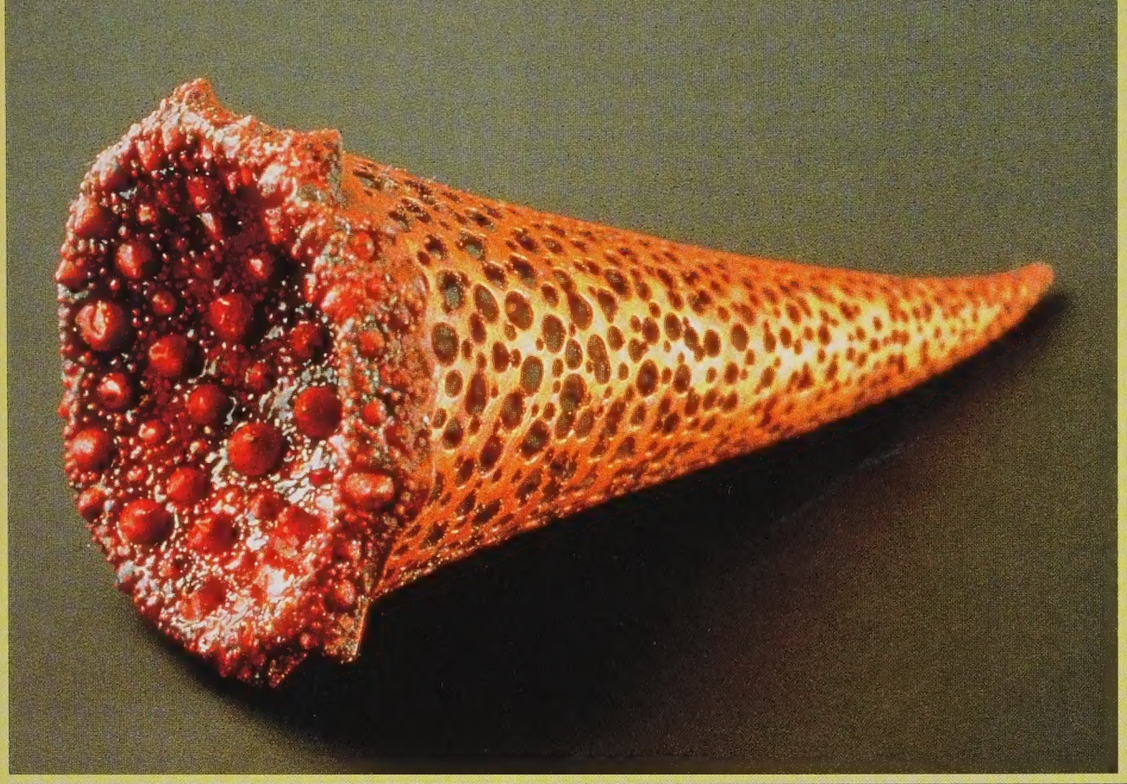
the work of Jennifer Mokren

above
Pomifores, 1996
copper, bark
5 x 11 x 9"

Skins and peels of fruits, membranes of pods, even the dermal layer of our own skin, camouflages and hides the substance within. What surprises and disappointments lurk beneath these often alluring containers? Jennifer Mokren seems somehow to slice through surfaces revealing, simultaneously, both inside and outside. Like the image of a cross-section from a biology text, her containers and objects have a revelatory irony, showing, on one hand, a lucid structure, while at the same time suggesting the ultimate unknowableness of that which lies beneath.

Like the pods which they resemble, her works also invite handling and scrutiny. The container becomes an object in its own right, no longer dependent on that which rests inside.

FCL

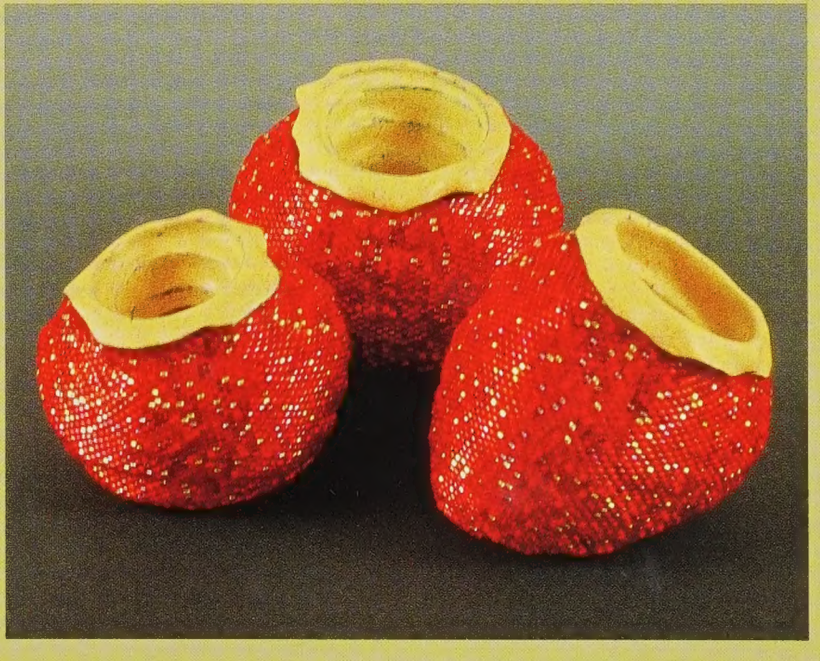


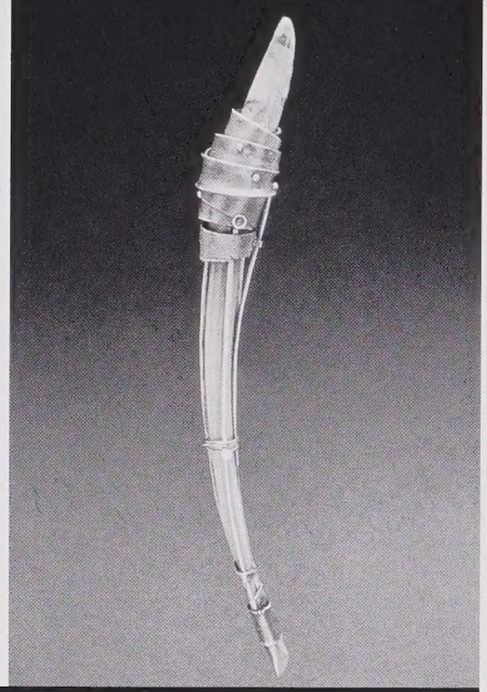
left
Cyclone Pomifore, 1996
copper, enamel
3 x 8 x 3"

middle
We Used to Be Twins, 1996
copper
4 x 9 x 4"

bottom left
Anemone Object, 1999
copper, enamel, beans
9 x 6 x 6"

bottom right
Berry Object, 1999
beads, copper, enamel, beans
3 x 6 x 4"

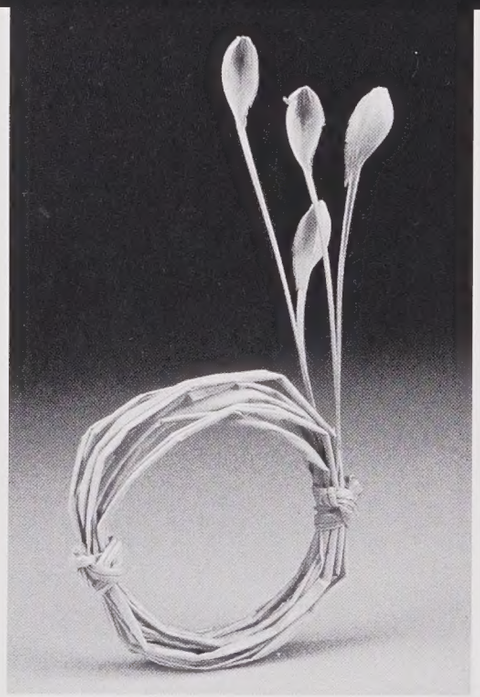




MARKED BY THE MEDIA/CONCORDANCE: A/K/A:92

BRUCE GALLERY
EDINBORO UNIVERSITY, EDINBORO, PENNSYLVANIA
SEPTEMBER 6-SEPTEMBER 28, 2000

text by LYNDA LAROCHE



above
Efharis Alepedis
Specimens of Nature, (rings)
natural objects, wax, paint

above right
Andy Cooperman
Quill
shibuichi, bronze, 14k, 18k,
tusk shell, ruby, jasper
4 1/2" high

Marked by Media was an invitational exhibition of jewelry curated by Sue Amendolara and Cappie Counard Wolf. Randy Long, Donald Friedlich, Andy Cooperman, Eleanor Moty, Mary Lee Hu, Lisa Gralnick, Tara Stephenson, Efharis Alepedis, Emma Gale, and Sondra Sherman were among the artists selected, each exploring jewelry from the perspective of personal discovery and intent. The university setting provided an opportunity not only for metal students to learn more about the field which they have entered but also for the public to be educated in a forum designed to encourage discussion. The exhibition represented a place of encounter and serenity, a zone of transition for anyone interested in personal adornment.

Efharis Alepedis displayed a specimen box of eighteen rings utilizing natural objects as her palette. Each artifact created from bits of nature, wax, and paint is enshrined, examined for merit and preserved for future investigation. The work represents the creative exploration of "the ring." It reminds me of childhood jewelry, wrapping a vine around the finger - enjoying the process of becoming, a model before it is cast. The scale and the inventiveness of each of the rings capture viewers; they are made aware of the obvious, the importance of curiosity and the celebration of integrity.

Organic, growing forms attract viewers by color, gems, and the preciousness of materials in the jewelry of Andy Cooperman. These functional works of art are to be worn, cherished, and passed on to future generations. This artist loves the material, works intuitively and demands respect without an artist's statement. Titles and explanations are not essential; the work speaks for itself.

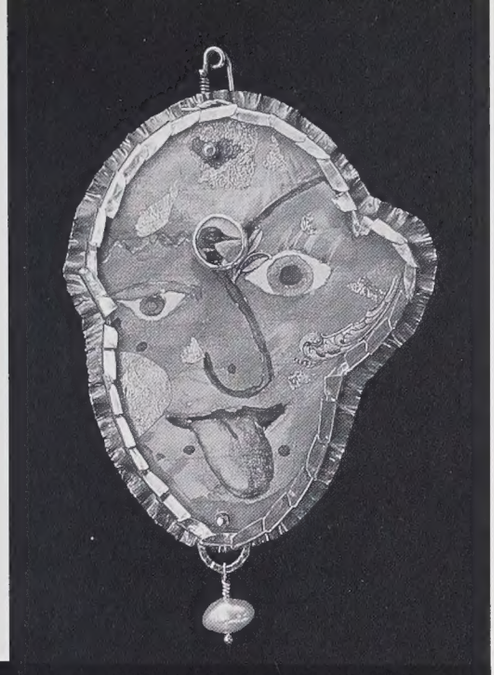
Emma Gale chooses materials of value as well as those more ordinary and formalizes them into objects easily worn. Simple, direct, and delicate these fragile statements represent a spirit achieved when something cannot be reduced any further; when it is as pure as it can be. I left wanting more; each object became a part of a story, a fragment, a still frame, a captured moment in time. Each piece is wearable and meditative, waiting for the confidence of the most sophisticated buyer.

In contrast to much of the work in the exhibition that deals with jewelry as either expressive or design-based, Lisa Gralnick's pieces examine the manner in which objects are charged with meaning. One has to admire the technical and mechanical expertise of Gralnick who remains meticulous in every detail. The chains are like heavy armor and I wonder if she is challenging the delicacy of the pendant as object. It is more like a heavy rosary that carries a container of explanation, a Shaman's cache of potions. Each is dangerous and frightening as if one were carrying the final ingredient for saving the world or destroying it. Vials are permanently sealed and time capsules are suspended for an undetermined period of time.

In concert with this invitational was an exhibition, *Concordance A/K/A:92*, which included the work of Marjorie Simon, Susan Sloan, Bibi Schutz, and Ginny Whitney. A/K/A: 92 is a group of women artists formed in the late 1980s. Their intent was to plan collectively for exhibitions and projects while maintaining each individual's evolution. In this context, each explores jewelry as a vehicle for personal discovery and intent. The jewelry of Marjorie Simon is a collection and recollection of times past and present. The work is primitive, raw, and genuine. It is difficult to criticize the work because of its honesty and technical experimentation reminiscent of folk art. In comparison to the earthy enamels presented in Simon's work is the controlled enameled jewelry of Ginny Whitney. Her enamels are vibrant, clean, pure, and simple; so surprisingly simple it appears that anyone could make them, which is their very charm. With design references to Russian Constructivism Whitney acknowledges her inspiration. However, the abstraction and selection of elements chosen results in the creation of a body of work more reminiscent of a Haiku poem.

While viewing this gathering of artists and their work, I focused on the pieces themselves, refusing to read titles or statements provided by the artists. Instead, I wanted to view the work on its own merit. To my surprise, my notations on the work during my visit to this exhibition paralleled the intent of the artists more often than not.

Lynda LaRoche is an Assistant Professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania



KEN BOVA: MAKING FACES

CONNELL GALLERY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 28, 2000

text by DOROTHY JOINER

The brooches and rings of *Making Faces*, Ken Bova's exibition at Connell Gallery, can be likened to the comic masks of Greek drama, signaling a happy ending. Giving free rein to his ludic spirit, Bova creates jewelry out of surreal associations, combining silver and gold with found objects, such as candy wrappers and bits of bone or plastic. His distinctive collages are all delightfully zany visages.

The *American Cat*, a ring, was inspired by what he calls a "goofy" picture on his fridge-- its upper half, his wife, Ellen; the lower part, his own bearded chin. The image on the ring merges the eyes and ears of a domestic shorthair tabby to the nose, mouth, and chin of George Washington, taken from a dollar bill. Spiraling up at the top is a 14k gold coil imitating a feline scratch post.

Similarly playful, *Loon*, a brooch, began with a water smudge on a legal pad, whose lines are still visible under the collage. Coloring the face lavender and blue, Bova adds gold leaf to the forehead and paints a rosy, protruding tongue. Like a proverbial third eye above the nose, a colored xerox of the bird after which the piece is named reminds the observer of the adage "as crazy as a...."

The brooch, *Listen*, is dominated by full, blue lips and an arched nose, which the artist describes as Aztec. Associating these Meso-Americans with the North American Indians now running gambling casinos, Bova adds the number one, again cut from a dollar bill. "Money talks," as the saying goes, and that's what people "listen" to.

Conceived during the forest fires of summer, 2000, near his Montana home, *Hot* is an elongated brooch translating into color the season's perilous heat: the forehead, fiery red; the chin, torrid orange; the nostrils, sooty gray. But a touch of spring green near the top offers cooling relief. Art transforms pain into beauty.

Just as the comic mask and its assured denouement affirm, in Northrup Frye's phrase, "the triumph of the life force," so do Bova's "funny faces" attest to the victory of the human spirit.

Dorothy Joiner is the Coordinator of International Programs and a Professor of Art History at the State University of West Georgia.

left
Ken Bova
Loon (brooch), 2000
sterling, 24k, pearl, watercolor, prismacolor, pastel, acrylic, candy wrappers
$3\,1/2 \times 2\,3/4$"

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH JEWELRY

OXOXO GALLERY
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
OCTOBER 28-NOVEMBER 30, 2000

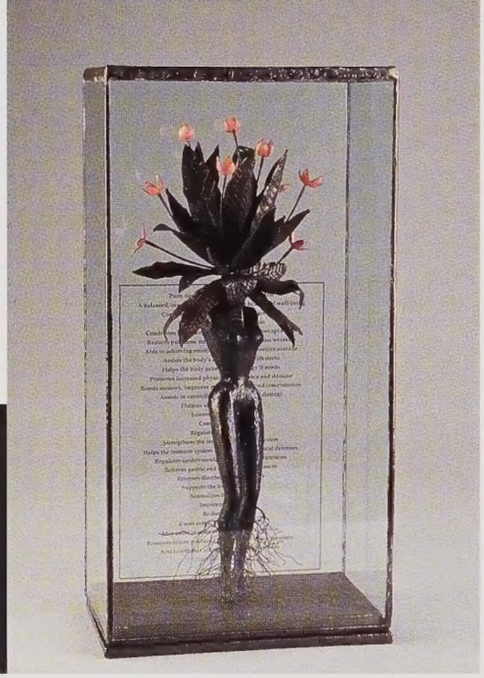
text by MARTHA McCRORY

In 1999 as she was planning her residency at the famed Massana School in Barcelona, Clara Ines Arana was also formulating plans to bring the work of a number of contemporary Spanish jewelers to the OXOXO Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland. Born in Manizales, Colombia and resident in Baltimore, Arana is a well known contemporary jeweler with a strong desire to expand her knowledge of jewelry and to communicate her skills and vision. She was invited to be an artist in residence at the Escola Massana, which was founded in 1929 by Agusti Massana, a wealthy Barcelona pastry chef with an interest in art, and since 1953 housed in the former Gothic Hospital de la Santa Creu where it offers among other disciplines programs in sculpture, graphic design, and ceramics as well as in jewelry. Arana's time there was spent in round-table discussions with teachers and students where drawings and written projects for jewelry were analyzed. In the weeks following her residency Arana visited a number of Spanish galleries selling contemporary jewelry and viewed the work of artists in this field. A short list was drawn up; invitations were issued and on her return to Baltimore Arana curated at Baltimore's OXOXO Gallery a small show featuring contemporary jewelers, above all from the Catalonia region of Spain – a region which years ago the work of the Barcelona architect and designer Antonio Gaudi and other nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists marked as artistically the most avant-garde in Spain. This distinction has continued to the present day.

Contemporary Spanish Jewelry, featured above all teachers and students from the Massana School. Twelve jewelers showed a total of one hundred and thirty works, both one-of-a-kind and serial-production pieces, and Baltimore provided the venue where the featured artists introduced their jewelry to a North American audience. A number of the students were guided in particular by one of the School's teachers, the noted Catalan jeweler, Ramon Puig Cuyas. Carmen Amador, whose jewelry suggesting ships and crescent moons, pursued the theme of fantasy and surrealism. Amador teaches repoussé at the School, and her jewelry was uniformly executed in this technique. Another Barcelona artist, Estela Guitart, a former student, showed *Urushi*-covered bracelets and necklaces. The articulation of these pieces was especially appealing, as was that of her stunning silver and oxidized silver necklaces which conformed beautifully to the wearer's neck. A complete departure from the jewelry already mentioned were the whimsical and witty brooches of another student, Xavier Ines Monclus. A carrot on wheels topped by a tiny house (*Pastanaga Speed*); a teddy bear riding a train (*Juguete Completo*); a house and a tree behind a brick wall (*Home Sweet Home*) are some of the subjects of the brooches executed in silver accented with cold enamel which were on display. Two jewelers, Joaquim Capdevila and Daniel Lemmi, whose choice of unorthodox materials such as recycled plastic and glass define a distinctive aesthetic, furnished works which were appealingly colorful and tactile. A blue and green necklace made of large round discs and another of black, orange, and silver with an Art Deco sensibility stand out. The jeweler Carles Codina, yet another Massana teacher, showed splendid cast pendants, one decorated with a moss agate, and bracelets carrying niello decoration. Codina is the author of a beautifully illustrated recent book which treats the technique of jewelry. It was first issued in Spanish as *La Joyeria*, and has now been published in English as *The Complete Book of Jewelry Making* (New York/Lark Books, 2000). In his books Codina shows the work of a number of the jewelers in this exhibition, many of whom will in the future be featured artists at the OXOXO Gallery. From Baltimore *Contemporary Spanish Jewelry* moved to the Thomas Mann Gallery in New Orleans where it remained open from January 6 to February 3, 2001.

Martha McCrory is a writer who lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

above left
Carmen Amador
Brooch
pearls, sterling



SUSAN KINGSLEY: POSTMODERN ALCHEMY

MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA
MAY13-AUGUST 27, 2000

text by PHYLLIS PEET, PH.D.

I entered Susan Kingsley's exhibition/ installation, *Postmodern Alchemy*, at The Museum of Art & History in Santa Cruz, California by passing under her interpretation of the nineteenth-century red velvet curtain that Charles Wilson Peale used in 1824 to introduce his collections of objects in his painting, *Self Portrait of the Artist in his Museum*. Peale represents for the history of American art the visual thinker, the man who learned by doing, by making, the self-taught artist who started as a saddlemaker, then watchmaker and evolved into a painter and collector who established the first museum in America. Kingsley's transformation of Peale's red velvet drape embellished with red-lipsticked kisses (*Lipkist*) proclaims her womancentered voice, her fascination with cultural artifacts, and the process of making, collecting, and exhibiting objects while nodding visually to women surrealists.

In her work Kingsley transforms one thing into another and ideas into material objects. In her alchemy she reveals the stories the objects tell us about ourselves. Creating objects from ideas as well as transforming found objects allows her to better understand the world through visual thinking. The exhibition was a fascinating installation, a "cabinet of curiosities" right out of the tradition of museum and department store display representing the artist's response to ideas about objects and their relationships to our culture.

Encircling the main room is a symbolic cornice of words from Kingsley's printed *Glossary* which accompanies the show and provides verbal insights into the connection between objects and ideas within the display, the installation, or the *Arcade – a place of amusement*. She provides unique definitions of words humorously juxtaposed in alphabetical order such as absurd, accessories, advertising, alchemy, culture, curiosity, desire, feminism, fetish, gender, irony, mannequin, masquerade, myth, nature, paradox, primitive, uncanny, and woman; in ways that create wonder and mystery about how we collect, possess, use, and identify with objects. By placing her sculptured artifacts of daily life under her cornice of words within this *Arcade* and her *Case of Curiosities* in a small adjacent room, she signals the viewers that they have entered the realm of wonder, transcending the objects' everyday use.

Kingsley's work which strives to "disappoint expectation" and "declassify definitions," to point out "irony, paradox, and enigma," has evolved through a years-long progression of making objects. In the tradition of Peale, she produced objects relating to nature, inspired by the flora and fauna of the natural world around the Monterey Bay area. As she mounted, on walls or in cases, her metallic forms of nature she began to address cultural definitions and the display of nature more directly. She became fascinated with antique encyclopedias of biology (represented by her electroformed, patinated *Dictionary* in the exhibition) that reflect human beings' historical fascination with words, taxonomy, collecting, and sorting plant life.

In her partly patinated copper sculpture, *After Ligozzi* she makes reference to the mythical qualities of a mandrake, a Mediterranean herb notable for its large forked root that often resembles a human body. Her realistic rendering in metal of a cannabis sativa (marijuana) plant brings Ligozzi's mandrake up to the present. Her *Barbie*, the famous body now with her head replaced by enameled flowers and leaves after Ligozzi's mandrake, is enclosed as an artifact on display in a vitrine representing the boxes that Barbie dolls are displayed and sold in. Kingsley goes beyond healing to show how we fetishize objects in hopes of improving our lives.

Her *Glossary* and cornice engage word-play commentary on our cultural uses of objects that refer to her sculptures. A Venus Fly-Trap is titled *Say it With Flowers* and a shaped Aloe Vera leaf, *Aloe Bracelet*, is designed to connect aloe's healing powers with the body. Ornamentation is central to her complex web of interests, The ornaments we wear signal our gender and identity, both personal and cultural.

Emphasizing shock as well as entertainment with exquisite humor, *Aesthetic Extensions* is a display hand embellished with highly elongated, winnowy, stylized brass fingers, *Toothfetish Necklace*, a gold-washed sterling set of life-sized teeth on a bronze wire. *Nailfetish Necklace* is comprised of enameled copper fingernails, *Handbag*, a stainless steel safety glove on a chain dog leash hanging from a mannequin hand; and *Untitled, Choker*, a stainless steel safety glove on a neckband. Kingsley's mounted copper *Fig Leaf*, has a common hose clamp on its reverse side to attach it to the male body, and her *22-Pound Pb Platforms*, lead platform shoes, size 6, both represent the many ironies, subtleties, and paradoxes in the ideas and objects human beings invent to express themselves.

Kingsley's highly complex body of work involves layers of definitions and meanings that show her determination to explore the history of culture from a Postmodern perspective. In her *Glossary* she defines Postmodernism as "too complex to be characterized with one simple set of stylistic criteria." This quality of unconventional diversity was displayed, demonstrated, and underscored throughout her brilliant, uniquely perceptive show.

Phyllis Peet, Ph.D., is an art historian and Director/Professor of Women's Programs and Women's Studies at Monterey Peninsula College in Monterey, California.

above
Susan Kingsley
After Ligozzi, 1997
copper
5.5 x 15 x 4"
Photograph by Robert Neimy

above left
Susan Kingsley
Fetish (Herbal Barbie), 1999
copper, mixed media
9 x 18 x 5.5"
Photograph by Robert Neimy

SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICAN GOLDSMITHS

The Organization for Jewelers, Designers and Metalsmiths

Photograph by Robert Sauber.

Suzanne Ramljak Appointed Editor of Metalsmith Magazine

The Society of North American Goldsmiths is proud to announce the appointment of Suzanne Ramljak as the new editor of *Metalsmith* magazine. Ms. Ramljak previously served as the curator of exhibitions at the American Federation of Arts, and is the former editor of *Sculpture* magazine and *Glass* magazine, and associate editor of *American Ceramics* magazine. She was the primary editor working with author Susan Grant Lewin on the book, *One of a Kind: American Art Jewelry Today* (1994), to which she also contributed an essay, "The Power of the Intimate: On Contemporary Jewelry and Sculpture."

Ms. Ramljak has a significant background in writing on craft and art for publications ranging from *The New York Times* to *Artnews*, and was a recipient of the Vanessa Lynn Prize for Critical Writing from *American Craft* magazine. In addition, she brings extensive lecture and curatorial experience to the position, including serving as co-curator with David Revere McFadden (American Craft Museum) of the forthcoming exhibition *Artful Deception: Illusion, Artifice, Surprise*. Ms. Ramljak holds a Masters degree in Art History from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and is completing her Ph.D. at the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

SNAG Website

Visit the exciting, new SNAG website to receive a wealth of information about the organization devoted to jewelers, designers and metalsmiths. The online service will link you to SNAG programs, conferences, services, exhibitions, events, and *Metalsmith* magazine. The SNAG website is a tremendous resource to find listings of suppliers, craft shows, schools, galleries, and more. The site address is: **www.snagmetalsmith.org**

Major New Competition

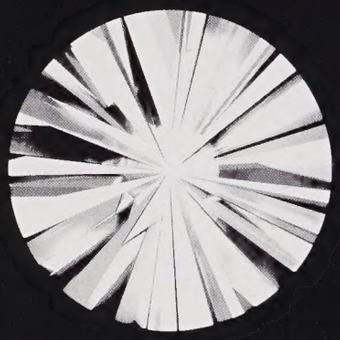
To celebrate the 3M company's centenary, SNAG and 3M are co-sponsoring an open design competition for metalsmiths entitled, "What's New With You? Innovative Items for Personal Use." The exhibition is designed to encourage and promote innovative jewelry, vessels, and flatware that utilize 3M's surface refinement, safety, and home-care products. SNAG members will pay a reduced entry fee. A portion of the show will be selected to travel, and both a print and CD ROM catalog are planned. The first exhibition venue is currently scheduled at the Center for Visual Arts-- Metropolitan State College Denver in connection with the Denver SNAG conference, June 12-15, 2002. There will be three generous cash awards provided by 3M in each category--wearable objects and non-wearable objects--totaling $18,000.

SNAG at SOFA Chicago 2000

The Sculptural Objects Functional Art (SOFA) Exposition is the preeminent venue for international craft galleries to present contemporary artists and their works. In Chicago this past November, SNAG presented a major exhibition of works from *Metalsmith's 2000 Exhibition in Print* (EIP). Lucy Lippard's EIP essay was republished in the 2000 SOFA catalog. In addition, SNAG sponsored three prominent metalsmiths – Daniel Jocz, Bettina Dittlmann and Harriete Estel Berman--to present their work in the SOFA lecture series.

below
SNAG's presentation of the Metalsmith 2000 Exhibition in Print at SOFA Chicago.
Photograph by David Barnes.

A dramatic new way to translate diamonds and colored gems into the language of todays jewelry designers.



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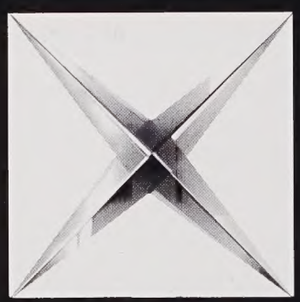

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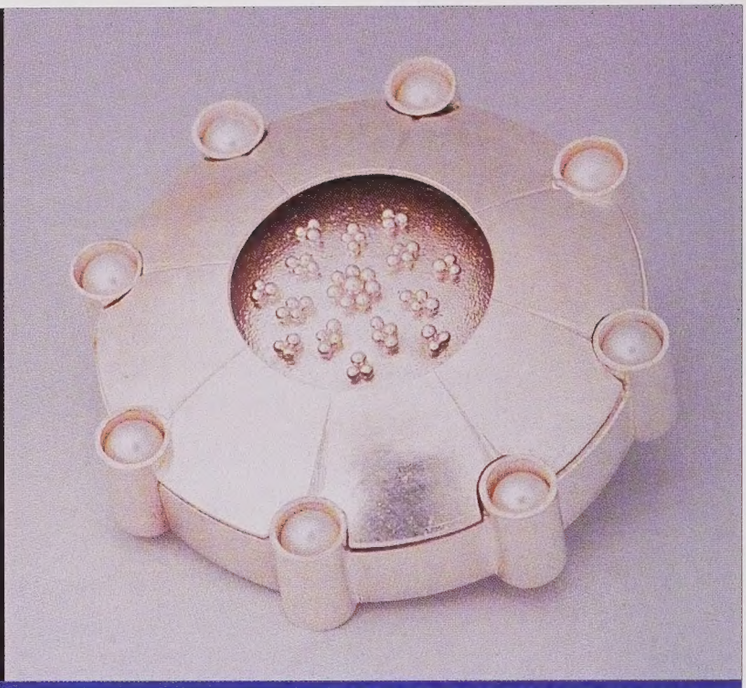

Imagining My Mother, STERLING SILVER AND PEARLS, Chih-Hao Chung, Taipei, Taiwan

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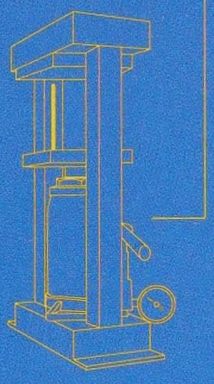

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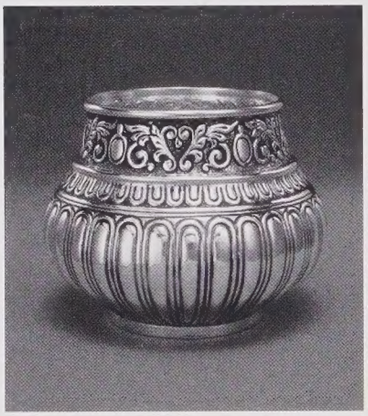

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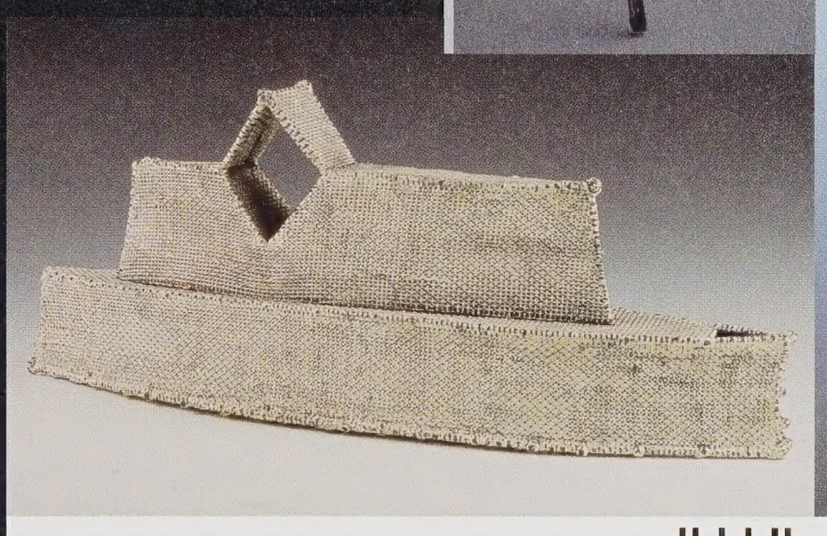

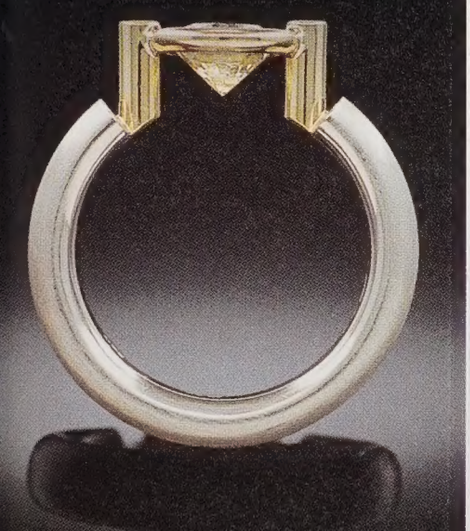

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silver
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Biba Schutz
Circum Pendant, 1996
oxidized bronze and copper, sterling, fine silver
4 1/3 x 1 1/3 x 1 1/3"

(*Metalsmith* Magazine)
Eun-Mee Chung
Passion (brooch), 1999
18k, sterling, diamond, paper
5 x 1 1/2 x 1 1/2"

Billie Jean Theide
Butte #EF-8 (teapot), 1997
bronze, electroformed copper, enamel, patina
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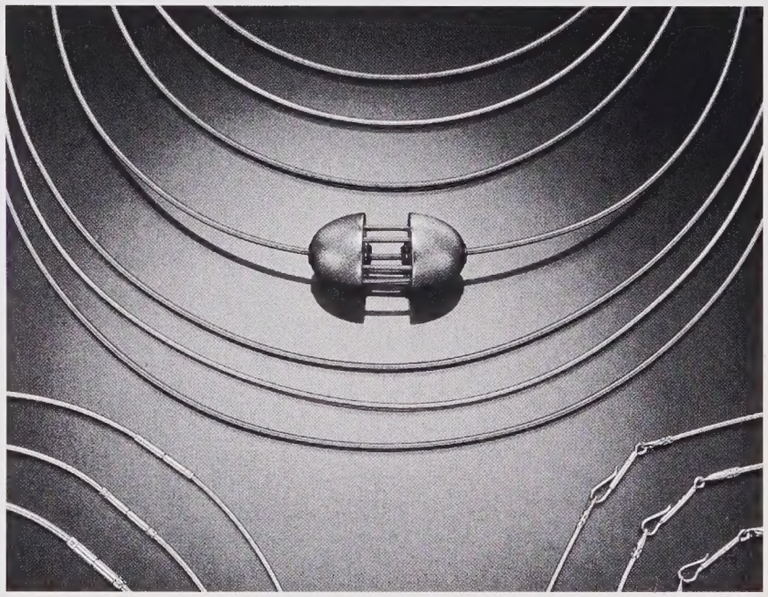

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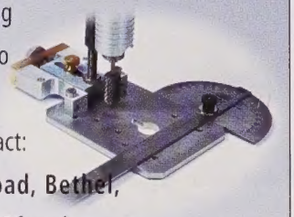

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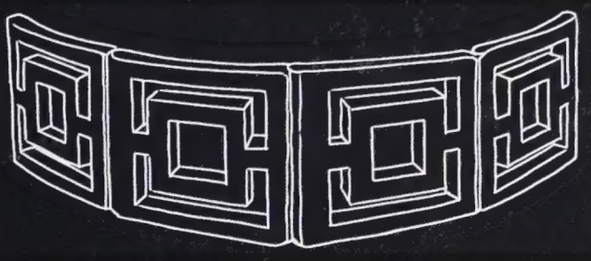

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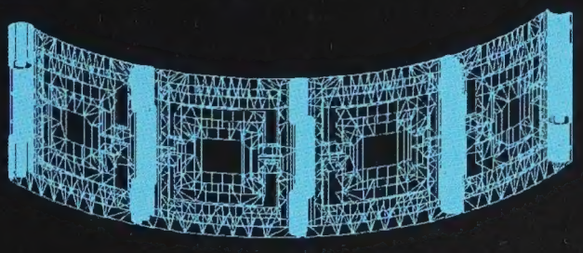

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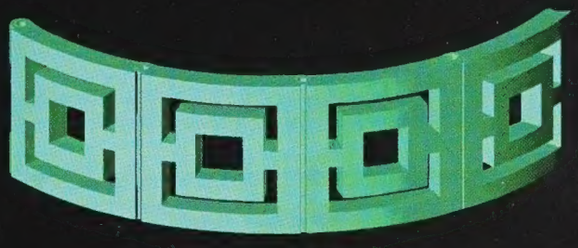

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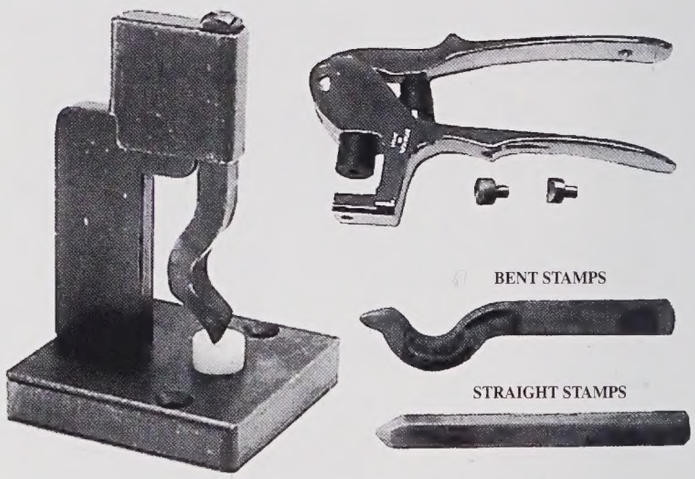

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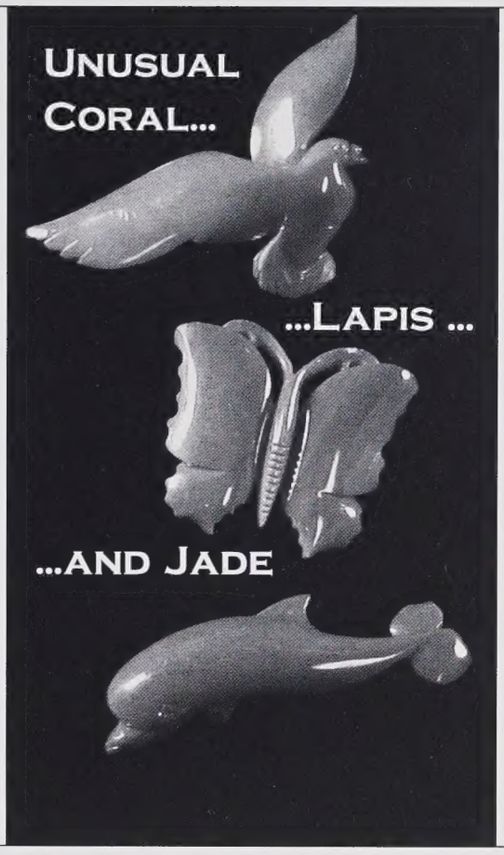

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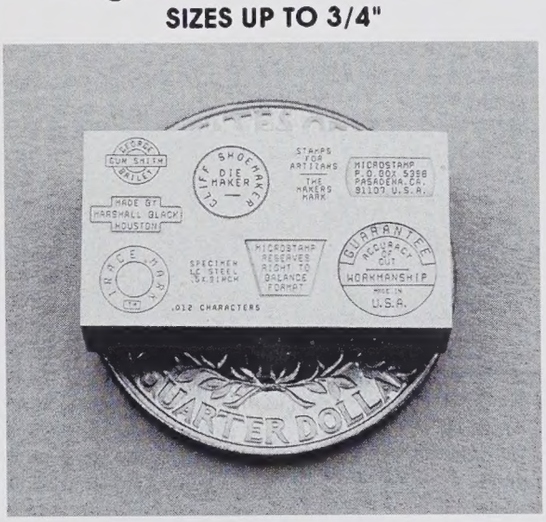

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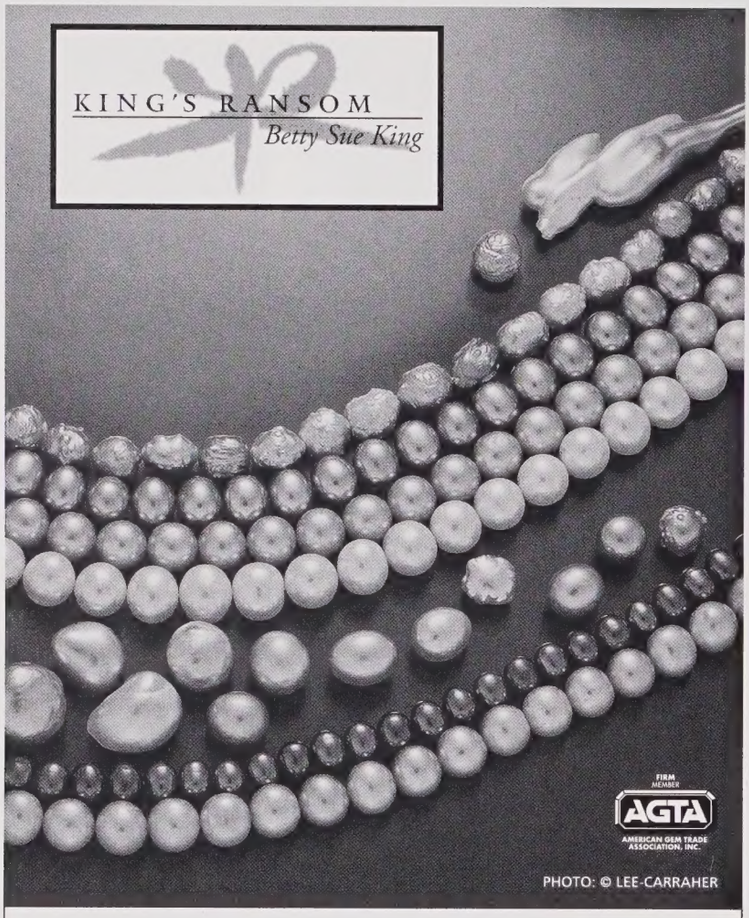

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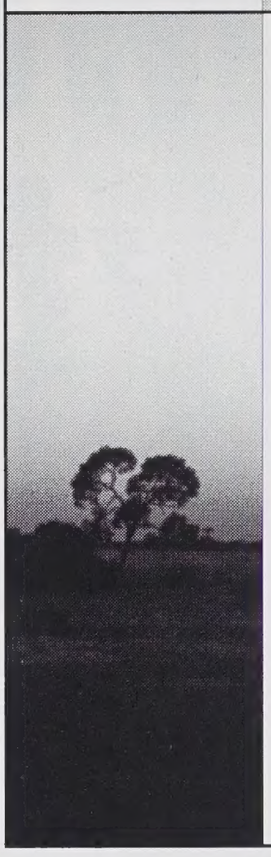

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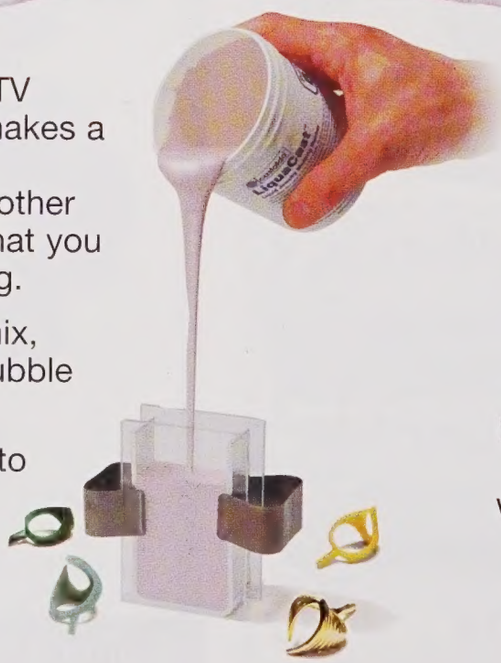

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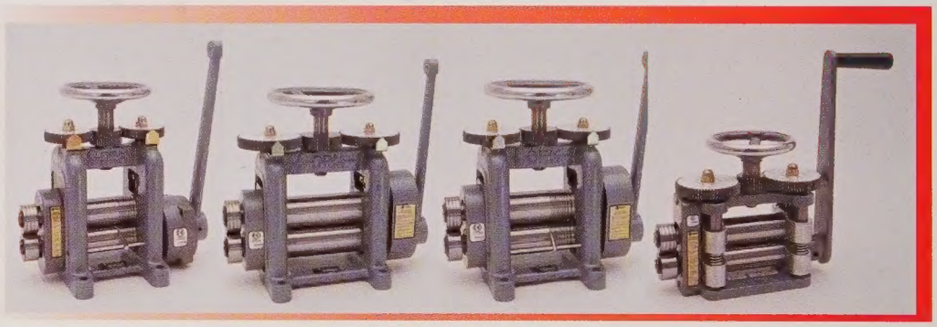

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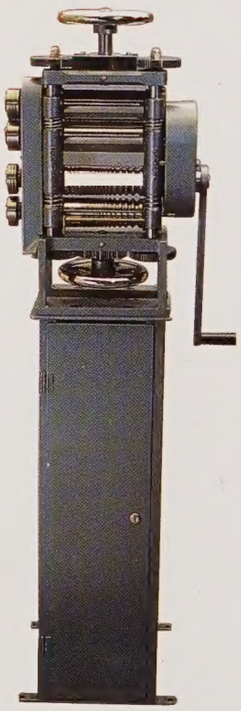

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